

*Frontispiece to Comm. of Theo. & Const.*



*J. Taylor del. et sculp.*

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THE  
CORRESPONDENCE  
OF

Theodosius and Constantia,

*From their first acquaintance to the departure of*  
THEODOSIUS.

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Now first published from the Original Manuscripts.

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By the EDITOR of the  
LETTERS that passed between  
THEODOSIUS and CONSTANTIA,  
*after she had taken the Veil.*

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*Enfans de l'Oisiveté!* CHAULIEU.

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L O N D O N:  
Printed for T. BECKET and P. A. DEHONDT,  
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E R R A T A.

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Page 72. for *spacious* read *specious*.

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94. for *sentiments* read *sentiment*.

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T O

GEORGE COLMAN, Esq;

**T**O live beneath the golden star of love,  
With happier fancy, passions more refin'd;  
Each softning charm of tenderness to prove,  
And all the finer movements of the mind.—

FROM gifts like these, say what the boasted gain  
Of those who exquisitely feel or know?  
—The skill from pleasure to extract it's pain,  
And open all the avenues of woe.

YET shall we, COLMAN, at these gifts repine?—  
Implore cold apathy to steel the heart?  
Would you that sensibility resign?  
And with those powers of genius would you part?

AH no! my friend; nor deem the verse divine,  
That weakness wrote in Petrarch's gentle strain!  
When once he own'd at love's unfavouring shrine:  
"A thousand pleasures were not worth one pain."

THE dreams of fancy soothe the pensive heart;  
 For fancy's urn can new delights dispense:  
 The powers of genius purer joys impart;  
 For genius brightens all the springs of sense.

O CHARM of every muse-ennobled mind,  
 Far, far above the groveling crowd to rise!—  
 Leave the low train of trifling cares behind,  
 Assert it's birthright and affect the skies!

O RIGHT divine the pride of power to scorn;  
 On fortune's little vanity look down!  
 With nobler gifts, to fairer honours born,  
 Than fear, or folly fancies in a crown!

As far each boon that nature's hand bestows  
 The worthless glare of fortune's train exceeds,  
 As yon fair orb, whose beam eternal glows,  
 Outshines the transient meteor that it feeds,

To nature, COLMAN, let thy incense rise,  
 For, much-indebted, much hast thou to pay;  
 For taste refin'd, for wit correctly wise,  
 And keen discernment's soul-pervading ray.

To

[ . ]  
To catch the manners from the various face,  
To paint the nice diversities of mind,  
The living lines of character to trace,  
She gave thee powers, and she the task assign'd.

O LAST-LEFT hope of the forsaken stage!  
The muse of humour's sole surviving friend!  
Shall COLMAN rest, in this *refining* age  
When wit alone, and elegance can mend?

SEIZE, seize the pen! the sacred hour departs!  
Nor, led by kindness, longer lend thine ear:  
The tender tale of two ingenuous hearts  
Would rob thee of a moment and a tear.

J. LANGHORNE;

LONDON,  
Nov. 10, 1764.



## ADVERTISEMENT.

AFTER the distinguished favour and attention so generously shewn by the public, to the *Letters that passed between Theodosius and Constantia after she had taken the veil*, no apology, perhaps, will be thought necessary for these that follow, or if any should be required, the Editor would gladly rest it on motives of gratitude to that Public, by whose favour he has been so much obliged.—If the abovementioned volume of letters might be esteemed a *Free-will-offering*, he is rather desirous that this may be considered as a *Sacrifice of Thanksgiving*. To some readers, possibly, the letters already published may appear more interesting, by others the present may be thought more entertaining; and (such is the

infinite

infinite variety of taste and sentiment) there is no doubt that both these opinions will be reversed. However, with respect to the monastic correspondence, it must be allowed to have this superiority, that it turns, for the most part, on religious subjects; yet the letters that follow, dwelling chiefly on moral philosophy and the oeconomy of life, must be allowed to be useful in the next degree; as they have, in general, some tendency to promote the happiness of human nature, to the improvement of the heart, or the enlargement of the mind: Had they consisted only in a rhapsodical intercourse of amorous professions, the Editor would never have permitted them to see the light, from a persuasion that books of entertainment, without either moral or intellectual utility, are mere time-traps, whose end is only to defraud us of those moments which will never return.

As this volume may, possibly, fall into the hands of some who are yet unacquainted with the story of Theodosius and Constantia, it is thought necessary to print it here as related by the Spectator No. 164.

“CONSTANTIA was a woman of extraordinary wit and beauty, but very unhappy in a father, who having arrived at great riches by his own industry, took delight in nothing but his money.

THEODOSIUS was the younger son of a decayed family; of great parts and learning, improved by a genteel and virtuous education. When he was in the twentieth year of his age he became acquainted with Constantia, who had not then passed her fifteenth. As he lived but a few miles distant from her father's house, he had frequent opportunities of seeing her; and by the advantages of a good  
 I person,

person, and a pleasing conversation, made such an impression on her heart as it was impossible for time to efface: He was himself no less smitten with Constantia. A LONG ACQUAINTANCE made them still discover new beauties in each other, and by degrees raised in them that mutual passion which had an influence on their following lives.

It unfortunately happened that, in the midst of this intercourse of love and friendship between Theodosius and Constantia, there broke out an irreparable quarrel between their parents, the one valuing himself too much upon his birth, and the other upon his possessions. The father of Constantia was so incensed at the father of Theodosius, that he contracted an unreasonable aversion towards his son, insomuch that he forbid him his house, and charged his daughter upon her duty never to see him more. In the mean time, to break  
off

off all communication between the two lovers, who he knew entertained secret hopes of some favourable opportunity that should bring them together, he found out a young gentleman of a good fortune and an agreeable person, whom he pitched upon as a husband for his daughter. He soon concerted the affair so well that he told Constantia it was his design to marry her to such a gentleman, and that her wedding should be celebrated on such a day. Constantia, who was over-awed by the authority of her father, and unable to object any thing to so advantageous a match, received the proposal with a profound silence, which her father commended in her as the most decent manner of a virgin's giving her consent to an overture of that kind. The noise of this intended marriage soon reached Theodosius, who after a long tumult of passions which naturally rise in a lover's heart on such an occasion, writ the following letter to Constantia.

THE



“THE thought of my Constantia, which for some years has been my only happiness, is now become a greater torment to me than I am able to bear. Must I then live to see you another’s? The streams, the fields and meadows, where we have so often talked together, grow painful to me; life itself is become a burthen. May you long be happy in the world, but forget that there was ever such a man in it as

THEODOSIUS.”

THIS letter was conveyed to Constantia that very evening, who fainted at the reading of it; and the next morning she was much more alarmed by two or three messengers, that came to her father’s house one after another to enquire if they had heard any thing of Theodosius, who, it seems, had left his chamber about midnight, and could no where be found. The deep melancholy which had hung upon his mind sometime before, made them apprehend the worst  
that

that could befall him. Constantia, who knew that nothing but the report of her marriage could have driven him to such extremities, was not to be comforted: She now accused herself of having so tamely given an ear to the proposal of a husband, and looked upon the new lover as the murderer of Theodosius: In short, she resolved to suffer the utmost effects of her father's displeasure, rather than comply with a marriage which appeared to her so full of guilt and horror. The father seeing himself entirely rid of Theodosius, and likely to keep a considerable portion in his family, was not very much concerned at the obstinate refusal of his daughter, and did not find it very difficult to excuse himself upon that account to his intended son-in-law, who had all long regarded this alliance rather as a match of convenience than of love. Constantia had now no relief but in her devotions and exercises of religion, to which her afflictions

tions had so entirely subjected her mind, that after some years had abated the violence of her sorrows, and settled her thoughts in a kind of tranquillity, she resolved to pass the remainder of her days in a convent. Her father was not displeased with a resolution which would save money in his family, and readily complied with his daughter's intentions. Accordingly in the twenty-fifth year of her age, while her beauty was yet in all it's height and bloom, he carried her to a neighbouring city, in order to look out a sister-hood of nuns among whom to place his daughter. There was in this place a Father of a convent who was very much renowned for his piety and exemplary life ; and as it is usual in the Romish church for those who are under any great affliction, or trouble of mind, to apply themselves to the most eminent Confessors for pardon and consolation, our beautiful votary took  
the

the opportunity of confessing herself to this celebrated Father.

WE must now return to Theodosius, who the very morning that the abovementioned enquiries had been made after him, arrived at a religious house in the city where now Constantia resided; and desiring that secrecy and concealment of the Fathers of the convent, which is very usual upon any extraordinary occasion, he made himself one of the order, with a private vow never to enquire after Constantia; whom he looked upon as given away to his rival, upon the day on which, according to common fame, their marriage was to have been solemnized. Having in his youth made a good progress in learning, that he might dedicate himself more entirely to religion, he entered into holy orders, and in a few years became renowned for his sanctity in life, and those pious sentiments which he inspired into

all who conversed with him. It was this holy man to whom Constantia had determined to apply herself in confession, though neither she nor any other, besides the Prior of the convent, knew any thing of his name or family. The gay, the amiable Theodosius had now taken upon him the name of Father Francis, and was so far concealed in a long beard, a shaven head, and a religious habit, that it was impossible to discover the man of the world in the venerable conventual.

As he was one morning shut up in his confessional, Constantia kneeling by him, opened the state of her soul to him; and after having given him the history of a life full of innocence, she burst out in tears, and entered upon that part of her story, in which he himself had so great a share. My behaviour, says she, has, I fear, been the death of a man who had no other fault but that of loving me too much.



much. Heaven only knows how dear he was to me while he lived, and how bitter the remembrance of him has been to me since his death. She here paused, and lifted up her eyes that streamed with tears toward the Father; who was so moved with the sense of her sorrows, that he could only command his voice, which was broke with sighs and sobbings, so far as to bid her proceed. She followed his directions, and in a flood of tears poured out her heart before him. The Father could not forbear weeping aloud, insomuch that in the agonies of his grief the seat shook under him. Constantia, who thought the good man was thus moved by his compassion towards her, and by the horror of her guilt, proceeded with the utmost contrition to acquaint him with that vow of virginity in which she was going to engage herself, as the proper atonement for her sins, and the only sacrifice she could make to the memory of Theodosius. The  
Father,

Father, who, by this time, had pretty well composed himself, burst out again in tears upon hearing that name, to which he had been so long refused, and upon receiving this instance of an unparalleled fidelity from one who, he thought, had several years since given herself up to the possession of another. Amidst the interruptions of his sorrows, seeing his penitent overwhelmed with grief, he was only able to bid her from time to time, be comforted—to tell her that her sins were forgiven her—that her guilt was not so great as she apprehended—that she should not suffer herself to be afflicted above measure. After which he recovered himself enough to give her the absolution in form; directing her at the same time to repair to him again the next day, that he might encourage her in the pious resolution she had taken, and give her suitable exhortations for her behaviour in it. Constantia retired, and the next morning renewed her

applications. Theodosius having manned his soul with proper thoughts and reflections, exerted himself on this occasion in the best manner he could, to animate his penitent in the course of life she was entering upon, and wear out of her mind those groundless fears and apprehensions which had taken possession of it; concluding, with a promise to her, that he would from time to time continue his admonitions when she should have taken upon her the holy veil. The rules of our respective orders, says he, will not permit that I should see you, but you may assure yourself not only of having a place in my prayers, *but of receiving such frequent instructions as I can convey to you by letters.* Go on chearfully in the glorious course you have undertaken, and you will quickly find such a peace and satisfaction in your mind, which it is not in the power of the world to give.

CONSTANTIA's heart was so elevated with the discourse of Father Francis, that the very next day she entered upon her vow. As soon as the solemnities of her reception were over, she retired, as it is usual, with the Abbess, into her own apartment.

THE Abbess had been informed the night before of all that had passed between her novice and Father Francis, from whom she now delivered to her the following letter.

‘ As the first fruits of those joys and consolations which you may expect from the life you are now engaged in, I must acquaint you that Theodosius, whose death sits so heavy upon your thoughts, is still alive ; and that the Father to whom you have confessed yourself, was once that Theodosius whom you so much lament. The love which we have had for one another, will make us

' more happy in its disappointment, than it  
 ' could have done in its success. Providence  
 ' has disposed of us for our advantage, though  
 ' not according to our wishes. Consider your  
 ' Theodosius still as dead, but assure your-  
 ' self of one who will not cease to pray for  
 ' you in Father

FRANCIS.

CONSTANTIA saw that the hand-writing  
 agreed with the contents of the letter : And  
 upon reflecting on the voice, the person, the  
 behaviour, and above all the extreme sorrow  
 of the Father during her confession, she dis-  
 covered Theodosius in every particular. After  
 having wept with tears of joy, It is enough,  
 says she, Theodosius is still in being ; I shall  
 live with comfort and die in peace.

*The letters which the Father sent her after-  
 wards are yet extant in the nunnery where she re-  
 sided ;*



*sides; and are often read to the young religious to inspire them with good resolutions and sentiments of virtue.* It so happened that after Constantia had lived about ten years in the cloyster, a violent fever broke out in the place, which swept away great multitudes, and among others Theodosius. Upon his death-bed he sent his benediction in a very moving manner to Constantia; who at that time was herself so far gone in the same fatal distemper, that she lay delirious. In the interval which generally precedes death in sicknesses of this nature, the Abbess finding that the physicians had given her over, told her that Theodosius was just gone before her, and that he had sent her his benediction in his last moments. Constantia received it with pleasure: And now, says she, if I do not ask any thing improper, let me be buried by Theodosius. My vow reaches *no farther* than the grave. What I ask is, I hope, no violation of it.—She died  
soon

soon after, and was interred according to her request.

THEIR tombs are still to be seen, with a short latin inscription on them to the follow-purpofe.

HERE lie the bodies of Father *Francis* and Sister *Constance*. *They were lovely in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided.*

SUCH is the story of Theodosius and Con-  
stantia, as related by Mr. Addison; on which I shall only observe that there is an interpolation in the letter written by Theodosius upon leaving his father's house. The passage where he says, 'The streams, the fields, the meadows, where we have so often talked together, grow painful to me,' is not genuine, which indeed might be evident to those who had not seen the original. Such romantic trifling is not the language of a heart in pain.

J. L.



The following Books written by Mr.  
LANGHORNE, are sold by T. Becket  
and P. A. Dehondt in the Strand.

1. The Letters that passed between Theodosius and Constantia after she had taken the Veil. 12mo. 3d. edit.
2. Sermons. 2 vols. 12mo.
3. Letters on Religious Retirement, Melancholy, and Enthusiasm. 8vo.
4. Effusions of Friendship and Fancy. 2 vols. 12mo.
5. Solyman and Almena. 12mo. 2d. edit.
6. The Enlargement of the Mind. Epistle 1. to General Craufurd. 4to.
7. Genius and Valour, a Scotch Pastoral. 4to. 2d. edit.
8. The Visions of Fancy. 4to.
9. The Viceroy. 4to.
10. An Hymn to Hope. 4to.
11. The Tears of Music. 4to.
12. The Death of Adonis. 4to.

Speedily will be published by the same  
Author.

I. The Poetical Works of Mr. William  
Collins, with Memoirs of the Author,  
and Critical Observations on his Genius  
and Writings.

II. The Enlargement of the Mind; Epistle  
the second, to William Langhorne, M. A.

T H E  
CORRESPONDENCE  
OF  
THEODOSIUS and CONSTANTIA.

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L E T T E R I.

CONSTANTIA to THEODOSIUS.

**I**S it possible that THEODOSIUS can approve the philosophy of *Bernier*? What would become of Christianity, were we to adopt the following Creed?—*L'abstinence des plaisirs me paroît un grand péché.* A sin to abstain from pleasures!—what can he mean? Is not this perfectly the reverse of all moral and religious precepts? Are not abstinence, and mortification, and self-denial echoed in our ears from the first dawn of reason? Are not

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we



we taught to guard against the prevalence of pleasures in general, and to look upon them as enemies under the mask of friendship? Consider them in a religious light, and they confessedly alienate the heart from it's duty. *The lovers of pleasure cannot be lovers of God.*—*The affections cannot be set on things above,* while they tend to earthly objects.—Consider their moral tendency, and they will be found to vitiate and debase the soul. Selfishness, and a neglect of the social duties, are inseparable from the pursuit of pleasures.—These are jealous Gods, and demand from their votaries all the affections of the heart, all the attentions of the mind. They enslave the better faculties, and make the senses the tyrants of the understanding.

SURELY the mind is too noble a province for such rulers; and, to me, the maxim of



*Bernier* appears to be no less inconsistent with sound philosophy, than with true religion.

AFTER all, what I have said on this subject is only to draw from you your opinion, which will always have great influence with

CONSTANTIA:

B 2

LET-

## L E T T E R II.

THEODOSIUS to CONSTANTIA.

**E**VER amiable, and ever ingenious; pious in her enquiries, and modest in her conclusions;—what a pleasure is it to accompany CONSTANTIA in the researches of of truth and science!—Clear in her conceptions, and acute in her expression, through the medium of her language, we discover more clearly, even those sentiments that are not unknown to us.—It assists the understanding in the same manner as the telescope aids the eye, and brings near the distant object.

THUS it is, Madam, that while you call upon me to the decision of moral or religious

gious enquiries, and place me in the dictatorial chair ; after having invested me with the commission of a judge, like a skillful advocate, you in some measure qualify me for that office, by laying before me the whole merits of the cause.

WHEN I praised the philosophy of *Bernier*, I had not indeed forgot that singular maxim of which you have taken notice ; but I was by no means aware that you would seize upon this eminence, and from thence discharge your artillery both on the philosopher, and his encomiast.

WELL—fair Friend ! since VENUS is armed for the engagement, and has already made her attacks, she must expect to meet with a DIOMEDE.—But THEODOSIUS, perhaps, will not be satisfied with his conquest ; if,

like her beautiful predecessor, **CONSTANTIA** should retreat, wounded *only* in the *hand*.

YES, my amiable moralist, I do approve the philosophy of *Bernier*; nay I adopt his creed too, and cordially declare with him, *L'abstinence des plaisirs me paroît un grand péché*. What is sin? Is it not to act contrary to the will of the Supreme Being?—Beyond all doubt; where that will is known. Is it not evident that the benevolent Creator of the universe intended, and still intends, only the happiness of his creatures?—This must be allowed from the consent and the appearance of his works in general.—And is not *pleasure* happiness? It must be so, or the term is vain. If then the Supreme Being intended *principally* the happiness of his creatures, and if *pleasure* be happiness; **TO ABSTAIN FROM PLEASURE, IS TO FRUSTRATE THE INTENTIONS OF PROVIDENCE—to act contrary to his**



his will ; which is, confessedly, the very essence of sin — *L'abstinence des plaisirs est un grand péché.* It is a *capital* sin to abstain from pleasure, since it must have been the *primary* view of the divine beneficence to communicate pleasure to human nature.

To what other end was this pomp, this magnificence of beauty scattered over the visible universe? Is not this the language of nature, through all her smiling works, “ Children be happy—brought into existence “ by the command of that glorious Being “ who is LOVE *itself*, your inheritance is pleasure, and it is your only duty to cultivate it “ well.” Are they not, therefore, children of disobedience, who thus invited into the vineyard of pleasure, stand idle in the market place, and vainly say, that *no man bath employed them?*

HATH God created a Paradise, and will not man look around him to enjoy it; but, like his first parent, as described by the English poet, still pensively contemplate himself in the *murmuring* fountain? Shall he for ever seek his image in the waters of adversity; and shall the fair scenes of life be deformed through such a mirror?

SURELY to abstain from pleasure is no inferior degree of guilt; since that very abstinence is a reproach to the eternal and invariable Benevolence.

FROM whom do we derive every appetite? By whose wisdom were the fine organs of sensation formed? To whose bounty do we owe the objects of gratification? And to whose benevolence are we indebted for the capacity of enjoyment? Proceed not these powers and faculties from the great source of  
all

all things ? Was not each adapted to it's peculiar function ? And is not the neglect of these capacities a fault ? Is not the mortification of them a crime ?

By what means came PLEASURE into the world ? Was it introduced by some malignant spirit ? Did some Dæmon contrive it for the destruction of mankind ? That could not be ; for no inferior being could have power to pervert the faculties and capacities of human nature. In such a case, the Supreme Creator must have been an imperfect being.— He must have wanted the will to secure the happiness of his creatures, or, if he had the will, he must have been without the power to execute or establish it. Either of these suppositions we must not dare, nay, indeed, it would be folly to admit. Pleasure, therefore, can only owe it's origin to God, and  
it's

it's very name proves it to be of divine extraction.

AND shall we refuse acquaintance with an object of heavenly descent? Shall we ungratefully bid the giver resume his gifts, or reproach him with a supposition, that he would affect us with propensities we ought not to indulge?

YES, *Bernier*, you are in the right. The renunciation of pleasure must be a sin—not only actually, but effectually a sin. The mind that refuses admittance to such a guest, must acquire a gloomy and unsocial habit; be fit only for the regions of monastic dullness, where lazy sanctity offers a preposterous devotion to that Being, who intended that we should rejoice in and partake of a general and social happiness.

WHEN

WHEN the bias of nature is opposed ; when her sovereign dictates are broken, man becomes incapable of rendering any acceptable service either to his God, to society, or to himself ! To his God he is ungrateful, nay, he insults him with a devotion more becoming the worshipers of *Moloch*, while he supposes him capable of delighting in cruelty, of afflicting his creatures, by giving them passions, which it should be a merit to mortify, and of tantalizing them, by requiring a rigid abstinence from every inviting enjoyment that nature suggested.—To the interests and affections of society he becomes cold and indifferent, when, what should principally engage him to them, the social instruments of nature groan beneath the yoke of undelighted abstinence.—Upon the same principles, he is an enemy to himself, to that being which was given him for his enjoyment, and which at last, he shall render back to the giver, with

“ I knew



“ I knew that thou wert an hard master,  
 “ therefore, the talent that thou gavest me  
 “ I have made no use of : Behold, here it is  
 “ again.”

O PLEASURE ! Thou first, best gift of  
 eternal beneficence ! Fairest and most beloved  
 daughter of heaven, all hail ! and welcome to  
 sojourn on earth ! A stranger thou art to every  
 malignant and unsocial passion, formed to ex-  
 pand, to exhilarate, to humanize the heart !

BUT whither has my subject transported  
 me ? Have I lost sight of CONSTANTIA ? that  
 cannot be ; for pleasure is my subject.

YET, possibly, my amiable friend is, by  
 this time, more than half displeased. Where,  
 says she, will this end ? Has THEODOSIUS  
 conspired with *Bernier* to revive the school  
 of *Epicurus* ?

By

By no means, Madam! The pleasure we preach is not the off-spring of chance, but the child of God.

THE *Epicuræan* doctrine of pleasure is selfish; this that we would recommend is pious.—From considerations respecting the uncertainty of this life, and the improbability of another, the Athenian philosopher, if we may believe his biographer, *Laertius*, taught his followers, to pursue incessantly all that was called enjoyment.—From reflections that are honourable to THE ETERNAL PROVIDENCE; that conclude him to be the liberal giver of all that deserves the name of enjoyment, of the objects that gratify, and the faculties that enjoy—in obedience to his benevolent intentions, would we summon the world to the pursuit of pleasure, and convince it that the sun doth not shine in vain.

NOR will this doctrine, as my fair friend apprehends, be at all inconsistent with the pure precepts of that religion we profess.

FOR, after all, what is pleasure? Is it to be found at the table of riotous festivity; or, in the venal arms of erratic love? Impossible! for these are the haunts of madness, of meanness, disgust and folly.

HUMAN PLEASURE is of a delicate temper. She disclaims all connections with indecency and excess—She declines the society of untender *Desire*, and of *Riot* roaring in the jollity of his heart. A sense of the dignity of human nature always accompanies her, and she cannot admit of any thing that degrades it. *Tenderness*, *good Faith*, *Modesty*, and *Delicacy* are her handmaids; *Temperance* and *Cheerfulness* are her bosom friends.—She is no stranger to the endearments of love; but she always consults her *handmaids* in the  
choice

choice of the object : She never refuses her presence at the social board, where her *friends* are always placed on her right-hand, and on her left. During the time, she generally addresses herself to *Cheerfulness*, 'till *Temperance* demands her attention.

LET us now, *CONSTANTIA*, enquire whether this amiable Being merits the charge that you have brought against her.

WILL she alienate the heart from it's duty ?—But, how ? has it not already appeared, that she herself was sent from God, the best gift of infinite benevolence ?—It is only in the abuse, in the perversion of the gift, that the heart can be alienated from it's duty.

THE lovers of pleasure may, undoubtedly, be lovers of God.—To be pleased with the gift, and not to love the giver, would be unnatural

natural and ungrateful.—Hence the charge of the inspired writer, That some were *lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God*.—What was this more or less than the charge of ingratitude ?

THE *affections*, you say, cannot be *set on things above*, while they tend to earthly objects. Literally, they cannot ;—but the best devotion, that such an imperfect creature as man is capable of paying, is derived from his mortal feelings, perceptions and enjoyments.—When he finds himself happy in these, he is naturally led to adore that Being who gave them ; to look up with gratitude to him, and so far to *set his affections on things above*, as he has reason to hope for a happier allotment in an improved state of existence.—Thus far, even a regard to things on earth, may assist his piety, and encourage his hope.

OUR



OUR ideas of heavenly objects are extremely abstracted from sense, and yet it is difficult through any other *medium*, to extend the affections to them.—It has been observed, with philosophical truth, by one of the sacred writers, *That if a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how should he love God whom he hath not seen?*—I will borrow his mode of reasoning, and will add, if a man love not those gifts of God which he hath seen, how should he set his affection on those which he hath not seen?—If he hath not been pleased with those enjoyments which the divine bounty hath allotted him, as peculiarly adapted to this state of Being; what moral prospect can he have of being better satisfied in any future state?

BUT you quarrel with the *moral* tendency of *pleasure*, and load it with the heavy charge of vitiating and debasing the mind; adding,

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that

that selfishness, and a neglect of the social duties, are inseparable from the pursuit of it.—Has not my friend made a *misnomer* here, in giving the name of *Pleasure* to *Vice*? Change the terms only, and the charge is just. It is impossible that *innocent* pleasures should *vitate*, or that *delicate* enjoyments should *debase* the mind.—It is impossible that those social delights which *soften* the heart, should make it *selfish*, or exclude from it's feelings a regard for the happiness of others,

If we look into the minds and manners of men, we shall find that not the very abstemious, the mortified, or the sanctimonious, are most distinguished for social virtues.—The reason, I think, is obvious—when innocent appetites and desires are restrained, the social affections languish under the same oppression.—It is scarcely possible, that any man who admits of no enjoyments in himself,

should be indulgent to those of others.—We behold innumerable instances of this, both in those who cannot and in those who will not enjoy.

The encouragement of pleasure, therefore, cherishes the social virtues; and he who is of a happy disposition himself, will be the first to promote the happiness of his neighbour.

YET, will not pleasures enslave the better faculties, and make the senses the tyrants of the soul? No doubt—if the enjoyments of the mind are excluded; but the soul has its peculiar pleasures which may and ought to take their turn; and if the intellectual appetites are gratified, as well as the sensual and the social; the province of the mind will neither be uncultivated, nor be subject to the usurpation of invaders.

PARDON me, Constantia! when I write to you, I know not when to have done!—even now I lay down the pen with reluctance—even now, with a sigh, I subscribe

THEODOSIUS.

LET.

## L E T T E R III.

CONSTANTIA to THEODOSIUS.

**T**HERE is nothing more true, than that credulity is the foible of women. I have a violent inclination to believe every word you have said; as well your gallantry as your philosophy.—Nay, I can hardly bewail the ruin of my poor arguments, though I have the vanity to think, that the breaches you have made in them, might easily be repaired.—However, you, certainly, had the happiest address to introduce your doctrine by the hand of flattery. The understanding of a woman, is by nothing so easily vanquished, as by the artillery of praise.—If it be to your purpose to weaken it, give it the compliment of strength. If you would blind



it, call it brighter than the day.—The praise of a philosopher is really a most dangerous thing, and it is not in female fortitude to resist it.—Accompanied with the ideas of truth and gravity, it make it's way to the heart without opposition ; and the sense and dignity of the speaker conspire with our natural love of it, to give it the sanction of sincerity.

SHOULD I preclude all future compliments from the letters of Theodosius, and say no more than what is usually said upon such occasions, *viz.* That I could not deserve them, however true it might be, it would not save me from the charge of affectation—an imputation, which of all others, would be most dreadful to me! Frank-hearted let me be esteemed, and, though destitute of every other excellence, I shall not be the meanest of my sex.

BUT

BUT you see, my friend, I have given you serious, and I hope, satisfactory reasons, why you should shut up the fountains of adulation; unless you think that they will give fertility to a barren soil.—Assure yourself, I shall conclude this to be your opinion, if you pay any more compliments either to my person, or my understanding.

I FIND no inclination to controvert any of the principles contained in your last.—They are all amiable at least, if they are not solid; and, possibly, it may be nothing more than the prejudice of a narrow education, that would withhold any part of the credit due to them.

AH, my friend! for, surely, you are my friend, if any confidence may be reposed in human appearances; pity the ignorance of a hapless girl, I had almost said an orphan,

unassisted, and uninstructed!—Believe me, Theodosius, to your conversation I am indebted for almost all the valuable sentiments I have.—You first taught me to think at large.—You told me that liberty of opinion was as much a natural inheritance as personal liberty—that human nature had long groaned under the tyranny of custom; and that the worst species of captivity, was the imprisonment of the mind.

EVER to be remembered is that distinguished lesson, which, upon our first acquaintance, you gave me in the Grove of Poplars. You politely pretended, that it was written by some other person for the instruction of some other lady;—but I soon discovered in it the spirit and manner of Theodosius, and found it so well adapted to my own circumstances, that I could no longer doubt either for whom, or by whom it was written.

NOT-

NOTWITHSTANDING this discovery, I must beg you will favour me with a copy of it; for that which you gave me has been destroyed, I believe, by the zeal and industry of Father M—— Adieu!

CONSTANTIA.

LET-

## LETTER IV.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

**B**Y supposing me to be the author of the following Letter, you have laid me under some disagreeable circumstances; but what would you conclude should I, on that account, refuse you a copy of it? Might you not justly charge me with that affectation which you so greatly despise? You shall have it, be the consequence what it will—CONSTANTIA commands, and THEODOSIUS must obey.

*Thoughts on the improvement of the Mind and  
Manners, addressed to a young lady of Bologna:  
By a Member of the Academy Della Crusca.*

MADAM,

THE first step that a young lady can take towards improvement, is to be convinced



vinced that she wants it.—The mind is situated in such an obscure recess, and is so little the object of the senses, that it is a difficult matter to take a view of it at all; much more, to behold it in its true light. Hence, we are apt to believe it sufficiently furnished, when desolate and empty; and to think it properly cultivated, though it produces little more than the rude growth of nature.

BETTER, however, is even that growth, than some artificial products. Better is the harvest of wild simplicity, than the rank and thriving crops that have been cultivated by the industry of Folly!

OF all the offensive weeds that are apt to spring up in a young mind, and to oppress its better fruits, *Affeciation* is the most destructive—where it takes root, the love of Truth and  
Nature

Nature perish unavoidably, and Artifice and Insincerity usurp their place. Qualities these are so infinitely odious, so perfectly opposite to all that is amiable or deserving of confidence, that, if a lady had an aversion to being beloved, she could not find a more effectual antidote.

NEVER, Madam, have I known an affected woman possessed of any amiable, or any virtuous quality!

THE *Coccatrici* is not unknown to you. Behold in her, then, a most instructive lecture on the management of the mind! For the *Coccatrici*, with the best natural understanding, not uncultivated by books, is at pains to render herself the most odious woman in the world. *Affectation* has the absolute dominion both of her person and mind.— Her words, her motions, her actions, her opinions,

opinions, are all under the influence of *Affectation*; all receive it's ugly and disgusting stamp.—Obscurely born herself, the *Coccatrici*'s passion is Quality.—Without any very striking accomplishments of person, she affects the softness, the negligence, the languishments of beauty.—These and innumerable more absurdities arising from the same principle of *Affectation*, render her the contempt of your sex, and the jest of ours.—Yet were ridiculous manners the only effect of this principle, the *Coccatrici* might be laughed at and pitied; but the same insincerity, the same deviation from truth and nature which produces these, has other consequences that render her detestable—she is scurrilous and treacherous: nor is this to be wondered at. A mind which affectation has alienated from every natural principle of simplicity loses at the same time, the social virtues, and becomes indifferent to the interests and the reputation of others.

OF no simple ingredients is this character composed.—Forbidding Pride, ridiculous Vanity, insidious Insincerity, virulent Malignity, make a part of the composition of the *Coccatrici*.

CHARACTERS are always the best comments upon precepts.—In the *Coccatrici*, Madam, you behold by what odious qualities a polished understanding may be debased.

FOR the improvement of the manners, therefore, something more must be necessary than the mere acquisition of knowledge; and this something I take to be the cultivation of benevolence and sincerity. An infinite number of virtues will spring from these valuable roots.—The love of humankind will make you a friend to every fellow-creature; and, together with the approbation of your own heart, general esteem and admiration will be your

your reward.—The love of truth will always save you from affectation, and all its disagreeable consequences.—Sacrifice at the shrine of Nature, and rather borrow from her your manners and sentiments, than from the fantastic humours of Fashion. From her, likewise, borrow your knowledge, and not from the labours of the schools.—She will give you no narrow or illiberal ideas of her great author.—Be such writers, therefore, your study, as have made her theirs ; such as have shewn the wisdom, the œconomy, the prudence, the benevolent purposes of her works. The contemplation of such objects gives the mind a large and liberal turn ; lays a foundation for the most rational piety, and reconciles us to the allotments of life, when we behold the superintendence of a wise and benevolent power, over every department of the universe.

NEXT



NEXT to natural philosophy, the history of humankind will merit your attention.—Various are the advantages to be derived from this course of reading.—A celebrated writer of antiquity has observed, that, he who is ignorant of what happened before his own times, is still a child.—Before I had made a competent acquaintance with history, I never could read this passage without pain and shame.—I imagined that the eyes of the great Orator were upon me, and that I appeared childish before him. I am now extremely well convinced, that what he observed, was comparatively just.

IGNORANCE is the characteristic of childhood, and the mind that is uninformed, at whatever period of life, is still in a puerile state.

FROM the knowledge of past events and their causes ; from attending to the œconomy  
of

of providence in the external and internal government of the world ; by tracing the progress of science, and the gradual improvement of the mind, we learn to form just conceptions of human actions and opinions, to make the best use of reason in foreseeing the consequences of principles yet unpractised ; to enlarge and liberalize our religious sentiments, while we contemplate the Supreme Being in the capacity of an universal parent ; and to see what moral perfection the human mind is capable of, when man in his savage, and in his civilized state, is distinctly presented to our view.

THESE, Madam, are enquiries worthy of a rational creature—worthy of that acute and penetrating genius which the liberal hand of Nature has given you !

MAKE an adequate use of her generous and valuable gifts.—Despise the sneer of

D

super-

superficial foppery, that is ever jealous of superior sense, and dreads the knowledge of a woman, on account of it's own ignorance.— If you are not without hopes of being united to a man of an accomplished mind, qualify yourself for his company.—Let him not be obliged to consider his wife merely as a domestic, useful in her appointment; make him esteem her as a rational companion, whose conversation may enliven the hours of solitude, and who, with a mind not vacant, or unfurnished, may, like the householder in the gospel, *bring forth out of her treasure things new and old.*

To what a despicable state would your sex be degraded, by those monopolizers of dignity and knowledge, who would debar you from both!—What! were reason, and reflection, and memory, and every other faculty that is adapted to literary improvements, given to you as they are given to us, by a different  
author,

author, or for different purposes?—Mean fallacy in our sex, that would establish the worst species of tyranny over you, the tyranny of the mind! Groundless and illiberal fear in man, that he should lose his dignity in the eyes of a woman, who was not inferior to him in sense! Is it the property of cultivated minds to hold cheap the accomplishments of others? Is it not from such minds only, that they can meet the respect due to their merit?—He who is afraid of marrying a woman, that is not absolutely ignorant, gives a fair proof, at least, that such is not his own case.

THERE are provinces, in which our sex may properly acquire and maintain a superiority of knowledge, and in which it would not be worth your while to excell.—There are, likewise, certain departments in which you should claim, unrivalled, the compliment of excellence; but the cultivation of the mind,

should be equally the care of both, since nature has given to both, minds equally capable of cultivation.

It was natural for me to digress, when I was pleading in favour of the privileges of your amiable sex!

To an acquaintance with natural and civil history, you will do well, to join the lighter and more amusive entertainments of the *Belles Lettres*.—The study of the former will enrich, that of the latter will embellish the mind.—From works of taste and harmony, we derive a kind of mechanical virtue, and learn to admire what is truly beautiful and harmonious in moral life.—The genius of poetry has a softening and humanizing influence on the mind; and it's pathetic powers increase that charming sensibility, that enthusiastic tenderness and delicacy of affection,  
which



which renders your lovely sex so justly the delight and admiration of ours.

I MEAN not, however, that by this kind of reading you should soften your mind, so much as form your taste, by admiring and attending to what is perfectly beautiful, in one of the finest arts of imitation.

THIS art is so naturally adapted to cultivate that harmony, which the Academics of old esteemed the essence of moral virtue, that I was always at a loss to know why Plato would have poets banished his commonwealth, 'till convinced, it was because they hurt the interests of religion, and injured the dignity of the Gods, by the sportive fallies of the Muse.

AFTER all, Madam, whatever proficiency you may have it in your power to make in

literary accomplishments, forget not that the qualities of the heart are infinitely preferable to those of the head. Should you be unable, for want of assistance, or opportunity, to furnish your mind with the treasures of antiquity; to acquaint yourself with the philosophy of nature; or to embellish your taste by the more polished labours of Genius; remember that you still have it in your power to make yourself amiable by a sweetness of disposition, by an openness of heart, and simplicity of manners."

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THUS far, Constantia, the grave academician—you will now, I hope, not be unwilling to take up the lighter carriage of the *Friend*.  
—Ah! name, replete with tenderness!—comprehensive of every kind, every faithful sentiment! "Surely you are my friend," did you say—Yes, Constantia, believe it, ever-

more

more believe it.—If every ardent wish for your happiness, every active impulse to serve and oblige you ; if the highest esteem, and the tenderest regard, may be allowed to constitute the most essential part of friendship, *surely*, THEODOSIUS is the friend of CONSTANTIA.

YET, too generous in your acknowledgments ; too liberal even in your ideas of gratitude ;—why will you attribute to me any part of your accomplishments ? Alas ! what am I ? The little virtues I have, if any I have, I borrow from CONSTANTIA, and by continually contemplating her perfections, I acquire, as it were, a habit of imitating them.

CAN I make a better use of these uncheerful hours, that I am doomed to pass at a distance from the friend of my heart ?—*Dans ces retraites solitaires*, I find no other consola-

tion than what writing to, or thinking of her affords me.

WHY those needless prohibitions of praise? Why should CONSTANTIA forbid her friend to compliment either her person, or her understanding?—the former has no need of, and the latter is above all compliment!

WHAT luxury in the indulgence of this growing tenderness! ah precious luxury!—perhaps, forbidden!

ADIEU! ADIEU!

THEODOSIUS:

## L E T T E R V.

## CONSTANTIA to THEODOSIUS.

**E**VER generous, and obliging; but, possibly, too tender!—Yet shall I blame my friend for his tenderness?—Surely, no—but why “forbidden”?—what does that mean?—shall the intercourse of friendship be forbidden?—I cannot think of that—I cannot, must not lose the friendship of THEODOSIUS.

You have my most grateful thanks for the Academician's letter, which I will endeavour to secure from the inquisition of Father M——. The good man has a strange aversion to every thing that tends to open the understanding.—Yet why would he keep one in the dark? Can it be of any advantage to him? In my  
 opinion,



opinion, the Academician, or, with your leave, THEODOSIUS, has incontestibly proved the female right to learning.

THIS, beyond all doubt, provoked the worthy father's zeal, whom I have heard say, That all knowledge was invested in the church.—Would to heaven, that the church would be liberal for once, and dispense a little of that knowledge to an ignorant girl, who would be no less thankful for that than for it's prayers.

WILL you, my friend, forgive me, when I tell you, that I have frequently wished you had been in holy orders, and appointed my confessor instead of Father M——? I flatter myself you would have indulged me with works of learning and imagination, and would not have confined my poor library to *Oraisons* and *Notre Peres* alone.

PRAY

PRAY tell me, my Philosopher, you that know the human mind, do not you think that the professors of religion hurt it's interests, by pursuing them too closely? Suppose they should now and then afford us a little respite!—Suppose they should diversify our reading and our studies; should we not return to the attentions of religion with greater alacrity?

ALL these churchmen, however, are not equally contracted in their opinions.—I have lately stolen the reading of a very delightful book, which, I have been informed, was written for the entertainment and instruction of the Duke of Burgundy, by the present Archbishop of Cambray, his preceptor.—I have, moreover, been told that the publication of this book was effected by the treachery of a domestic, and that it brought  
fresh

fresh inconveniences on the prelate already in disgrace !

IN what a miserable condition is human reason, when liberal sentiments will bring a man into disgrace ! Adieu !

CONSTANTIA.

LET-

## LETTER VI.

## THEODOSIUS to CONSTANTIA.

I Rejoice that you are become acquainted with the new publication of M. *Fenelon*, the most amiable philosopher that ever Europe produced ! His affluence of imagination ; his glowing and impassioned sentiments ; the attic sweetness and delicacy of his style—but, above all, that delightful enthusiasm, which, worshiping at the shrine of simple and beautiful nature, makes every reader a convert to her principles ;—all these qualities give to *Fenelon* the palm of philosophy among the moderns.

I mourn, with my generous CONSTANTIA,  
I mourn his disgrace ; for it is the disgrace of  
my

my country. It is not for *Fenelon* we need  
 repine.—Reconciled to every event by the  
*addoucissement* of philosophy, is he not more  
 happy in the confines of CAMBRAY, than  
 he could be, if, caressed amongst the num-  
 ber of favourites, he yet breathed the un-  
 wholesome air of a court? Zealous in the dis-  
 charge of his pastoral duties, a friend to  
 humankind from principle, busy in the ex-  
 ercise of beneficence to all orders, and all  
 societies of men—Who is so happy, or so  
 great as *Fenelon*?

Like some fair star that shoots it's evening ray  
 Brighter along the dim wood's opening way,  
 So FENELON, by favouring courts admir'd,  
 More feebly shone than FENELON retir'd.

THINK not, CONSTANTIA, that I am par-  
 tial to this illustrious man, because I have the



honour and the happiness of his friendship.  
 —The following substance of a conversation,  
 that once passed between us, will convince  
 you, that I have given you no flattering pic-  
 ture of him.

Mr. De FENELON.

My regard for you, Theodosius, makes me  
 wish your happiness; and if my longer ac-  
 quaintance with life may intitle me to give  
 you any advice on that subject, I will not be  
 sparing of it.

THEODOSIUS.

SIR, you will do me the greatest favour.  
 I have hitherto been a stranger to misery;  
 and if you would instruct me how to preserve  
 the happiness I enjoy, methinks you need only  
 tell me, how I may deserve the continuance  
 of your friendship.

Mr.

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Mr.

Mr. De FENELON.

ON that you may at all times rely. But our friendships, like every thing else that we enjoy, are subject to the influences of chance and time. I will give you the best proof I can of mine, therefore, while I have it in my power.——

THE life of man has many cares belonging to it; but the first and greatest care ought to be that of the immortal Soul.—We cannot be too attentive to the interests of a Being that shall endure for ever, and to place any other in the scale against these, would be absolute folly.

THEODOSIUS.

My Lord!——

Mr. De FENELON.

—BUT you cannot want convictions of this kind.

kind.—Yet there is another care of the soul which may not have occurred to you.—

THEODOSIUS.

I BEG to be informed of it.

Mr. De FENELON.

HAVE not you observed the progressive improvement of the mental faculties, from the first dawn of reason, to the decline of life?

THEODOSIUS.

THAT improvement must be obvious to every eye;—but some of those faculties seem to decline with life itself—the imagination frequently languishes under the weight of years—the powers of reason and reflection are, many times, almost wholly lost; and the memory is entirely effaced.—So far the per-

E

fection



fection of the soul seems to depend on the perfect state of the body.

Mr. De FENELON.

As the body is merely the habitation of the soul, it's tenant can no longer occupy those apartments that are ruinous, or decayed by time or accidents.—Hence some of the mental faculties seem to be annihilated, when they are only suspended; thus oftentimes we may vainly solicit the memory for an object to day, with which it will voluntarily present us to-morrow. An intelligent nature cannot suffer from material influences, and, therefore, may exist independently of them.—Nay, it may exist in the perfection of it's powers, though those powers, for want of their proper vehicles, are not called forth.

THEODOSIUS.

I CONCEIVE the possibility of this, and  
am

am now impatient to be informed, what new care it is, which has the soul for it's object.

Mr. De FENELON.

As the faculties of the soul are continually improveable, and cannot be destroyed by what happens to the body, it is probable that in whatever state of comparative perfection they are, upon quitting this mode of being, in the same they will pass into another, which though higher, shall be still improveable like the former.

THEODOSIUS.

WHAT would you infer from hence?

Mr. De FENELON.

THAT, next to the exercise of virtue, the improvement of the mind ought to be our principal care: For as the former will entitle

us to an improved state of being, so the latter will qualify us for the enjoyment of it. From the benevolence of the Supreme Being, as well as upon the principles of reason and philosophy, we have a right to hope that the soul, when it quits the body, will not revert to that state of ignorance in which it appears to be, when it first informs it.

THEODOSIUS.

THIS is a very pleasing conclusion, and suggests to me a variety of agreeable reflections.

Mr. De FENELON.

I HAVE received great satisfaction from the contemplation of it. It is pregnant with many circumstances of comfort.—When we have been toiling for the acquisition of knowledge, we may have the pleasure to conclude, that we have not been *labouring for the bread*  
that

*that perisheth ; but for that which endureth unto eternal life.*—It must be the greatest consolation to reflect, that the mental improvements we make, shall last beyond the grave ; and that the treasures of knowledge we lay up here, we shall enjoy hereafter.——

IF we have contributed by our own writings to the advancement of science and the cultivation of the mind—what a glorious reflection does it afford, that these effects will last for ever—that the souls which have received new lights, new information from our discoveries, shall retain them in every successive period of being ; and that thus we shall have contributed to the perfection of glorified natures and everlasting intelligences.—There is something ravishing in the thought—I am transported—I feel a godlike pleasure in the indulgence of it.

## THEODOSIUS.

You, my good Lord, who have contributed so greatly to the cultivation of the human mind, have a right to all the pleasures that such reflections can afford;—and great, indeed, and adequate to the dignity of human nature, are the objects of complacency that attend them. But, for my own part, I have always thought, that every improvement the mind could make in this state of being, would be superfluous in another, that it's faculties would be infinitely enlarged, and that at the command of Omnipotence, it would make a quick transition to the angelic nature.

## Mr. De FENELON.

FOR such suppositions, however common they may be, I apprehend we have little more or better authority than what self-flattery will  
afford



afford us : It appears, and has ever appeared to me, more probable that the soul should arise to a state of such perfection as we conceive of the angelic natures, by more regular gradations, than are usually assigned to it.

\* \* \* \* \*

HERE our conversation was interrupted by a letter from Madame *Guyon* ; which while the good prelate was perusing with visible eagerness, I retired into the garden, and was led into the following melancholy reflections.

“ How affecting is it to observe, that the most enlightened minds make the nearest approaches to certain degrees of madness, or of weakness ! Genius seems to be the child of enthusiasm ; and yet enthusiasm is frequently the disgrace, the ruin of genius. The Archbishop of Cambray, the literary ornament of Europe, distinguished for the most pure, the

most refined philosophy, is carried away by the dreams of fanaticism, and attends to the ravings of an insane devotee ; for such is this *Madame Guyon* ; and to this pitiable error of our amiable prelate, some have imputed his disgrace."

AFTER walking some time alone, I was again joined by the Archbishop, who, with that calm benignity of countenance peculiar to him, resumed the conversation. What followed would stretch this letter too far—Expect an account of it in my next.

ADIEU !

THEODOSIUS.

LET-

## L E T T E R VII.

THEODOSIUS to CONSTANTIA.

Mr. De FENELON.

**Y**OU will excuse me, Theodosius; a letter from Madame *Guyon* always commands my attention. That seraphic woman seems to have obtained a kind of beatification; and I look upon an address from her as it were a voice from heaven.—But I will not solicit your attention to a subject which has given occasion to so many unhappy disputes.—I will pursue my purpose of giving you the best instructions I am able to give you, with regard to your conduct and your happiness.

BEFORE we can tread the stage of life with that gracefulness and propriety, which render

der every character easy and agreeable, it is absolutely necessary, that we should acquire a considerable knowledge both of mankind, and of ourselves.—This knowledge is not hastily, or easily to be obtained.—We must have mixed with society, and have attended to the different forms, that the passions and pursuits of men assume in different characters, before we can form any judgment of them that shall be generally adequate. I have known some men of so keen a penetration, that they have been able to judge of characters almost intuitively ;—but hasty decisions, though they may often be right, may likewise many times be wrong ; and they never ought to have the least weight with us in any thing, that may concern the reputation or the interest of the person we so judge of.—What I would observe, is, that there are methods of acquiring a readiness of judging ;  
and

and that such an acquisition must be of great use to us in the commerce of life.—The only means I know of are those I mentioned to you—to attend to and learn the different forms that the passions assume in different characters.

THEODOSIUS.

AND yet, my Lord, may not an artificial deportment frequently render such an enquiry vain?

Mr. De FENELON.

It may sometimes perplex it, but will seldom render it vain ;—even artifice itself takes a colour from the passions, and they may be read and distinguished in it's operations.

THEODOSIUS.

THUS you would instruct me to know men  
in



in general;—but may there not be a more particular process of enquiry, where a more particular knowledge of individuals is necessary? I should be glad to be informed how I might obtain a thorough knowledge of the man I could wish to make my friend.

Mr. De FENELON.

FOR this different methods have been recommended, and different experiments have been tried. Some have had recourse to the chymical process of the bottle, and others to a fictitious distress; but both to no valuable effect. The first did not consider that a man deprived of reason is no longer a man; and the last had not reflected that, on certain occasions, a man might want the power, though he wanted not the will to relieve the distresses of his friend.—

IF you would obtain a perfect knowledge of any man, it must be from his domestic character.

character. Such a father, master, brother, son, or husband, as he shall be found, such a friend will he be.—It is, moreover, in the minuter circumstances of his conduct, that we are to enquire for a man's real character.—In these he is under the influence of his natural disposition, and acts from himself—while in his more open and important actions, he may be drawn by public opinion, and many other external motives, from that bias which nature would have taken.—

WERE I once more to make choice of a friend, the first qualities I would look for in him, should be *Sincerity*, and *Sensibility*: For these are the foundation of almost all other virtues.

THEODOSIUS.

STOP not here, my Lord, I intreat you ;  
but tell me how that self-knowledge is to be  
acquired ;

acquired; the acquisition of which you have allowed to be so essential to our happiness.

Mr. De FENELON.

THERE is no study so necessary as this; and yet, unfortunately, there is none so difficult. Self-knowledge, like that Hesperian fruit, which was defended by the vigilance of sleepless dragons, is surrounded by so many powerful guards, that it is almost inaccessible.—Indulge me a moment, Theodosius, in my favourite province of alegory.—The most assiduous of these guards is VANITY, and, at the same time, the most artful.—If you are determined to have access, she has address enough to impose upon you, and, instead of *Self-knowledge*, to present you with a different object, fair, indeed, and beautiful to look upon, but very unlike the figure you ought to have seen.—PRIDE stands, a dangerous

gerous centinel, at the gate of *Self-knowledge*; when you demand admittance, he seats you on a throne, and bids you look down on the crowds that surround you; you look with complacency, and return with ignorance.—Should the arts both of PRIDE and VANITY be ineffectual, there is yet another redoubt to be attacked, which is defended by SELF-DECEPTION. This is the subtlest of all the guards that surround the tree of Self-knowledge—in her hand is a waving mirror that turns every way, which so dazzles and confuses the sight, that you cannot possibly distinguish the real object you aim at, from the images reflected in her mirror;—at length, with one of those images you return, satisfied and deceived.

THEODOSIUS.

THESE, indeed, make a formidable guard.  
—How shall they be overcome?

Mr.

Mr. De FENELON.

ONLY by the assistance of TRUTH. As the machinations of inferior enchanter vanishi upon the appearance of an abler magician ; or, rather, as the *diableries* of infernal spirits are destroyed by the influence of a celestial ; so PRIDE, VANITY, and SELF-DECEPTION, fly from the approach of TRUTH.

THEODOSIUS.

YET is it not, my Lord, a matter of difficulty, to engage this valuable auxiliary ?

Mr. De FENELON.

—OR, rather, to persuade ourselves to employ him—for there the difficulty lies :—Before he can be brought over to our party, he requires so many mortifying concessions, that we reject his services, because we are unwilling to purchase them at so dear a rate.



THEODOSIUS.

YET surely, my Lord——

Mr. De FENELON.

THEY are but imaginary possessions that he requires us to part with.—It is very true; and, for that reason, one would think the terms not hard.—The dominions of VANITY, like the gardens of *Armida*, are purely ideal, and may be given up without loss.

THEODOSIUS.

AND yet, possibly, we are indebted to this same VANITY, for half the happiness we enjoy.—Does not the whole art of happiness consist, principally, in being well deceived?

Mr. De FENELON.

You have drawn me upon a rock that I wished to avoid.—For the sake of TRUTH

F

and

and VIRTUE, I am willing to persuade myself that it is not so;—certainly, we are not deceived when we derive our happiness from the cultivation of these.—At the same time, I will own that, such is the weakness of human nature, there are a thousand *douceurs* necessary to give a relish to life, in the composition of which, deceit has a principal hand.—But what the English poet calls “The sober Certainty of waking Bliss,” that must undoubtedly flow from the exercise, or the reflection of what is real and substantial.

## THEODOSIUS.

It should seem, then, that there are two sources of happiness;—one from which the imagination derives fancied entertainment and unreal pleasure; another that, arising in conscious virtue, yields to reason and reflection a more genuine delight.

Mr. De FENELON.

EVIDENTLY—and we may drink at both these sources: But we should make it our care, that the fountains of imaginary pleasure contain nothing, that may tend to inebriate or disorder the mind.

THEODOSIUS.

CAN they ever be attended with such consequences?

Mr. De FENELON.

Too frequently they are.—The imagination may be indulged, 'till it shall acquire an habitual empire over the understanding.—A man whose genius and temper are naturally warm and fanciful, may give himself up so entirely to the sweet influences of enthusiasm, that the powers of cool reason and discern-

ment shall be greatly invalidated, if not wholly suspended.—

\* \* \* \* \*

IMAGINE, my Constantia, how this speech affected me.—At that moment the affair of Madame *Guyon* occurred to me, and I wept to think, that my amiable instructor, in his own person, bore testimony to the truth of his observation.

THE remaining part of our conversation, with my answer to some passages in your last letter, shall follow this without delay.

ADIEU!

THEODOSIUS.

LET-

L E T T E R VIII.

THEODOSIUS to CONSTANTIA.

I Concealed my tears as well as possible, while the good prelate thus proceeded.

Mr. De FENELON.

EVERY principle acquires force and influence from habit ; and if it be, as it certainly must be, for our happiness, to live under the dominion of *Reason*, we should take care to exercise and consult it upon every occasion.— Thus it will acquire strength and efficacy, and our obedience to it's dictates, will become easy from habit.

THEODOSIUS.

THE dictates of *Reason* are undoubtedly the laws of life.—But, in general, my Lord,



how impotent and ineffectual!—What avails her legislation, when the *Will*, the executive power, seems not to be in her interest?

Mr. De FENELON.

THE *Will* must be gained over by art, and management. Where *Reason* has not established her empire, she must do it by degrees;—exert her authority in little and indifferent things—make mock-fights with the enemy, and have recourse to every other gradual and persuasive method, which are made use of to reconcile us to tasks of difficulty.

THEODOSIUS.

THIS method, indeed, my Lord, is the most promising; but it seems that we either want skill, or inclination to apply it.—We always consider *Reason*, as imposing her dictates with a magisterial spirit.—She seems to  
 approach

approach us with an air of rigid honesty, rude and unpolished, as the dictators from the plough.—

Mr. De FENELON.

AND did the same simplicity of manners, which distinguished the age of *Cincinnatus*, prevail at this day, she would be as successful too.—Alas ! Theodosius, to the loss of that simplicity ; to our deviation from nature, we owe the greatest part of those evils whereof we complain. I think the precept most essential to the happiness of human life, is, “ Live agreeably to nature.”

THEODOSIUS.

THIS precept, my Lord, appears to want a comment.—May I have the happiness to hear the Archbishop of *Cambray* preach from such a text ?

Mr. De FENELON.

NATURE herself will here be the best commentator. She, as well as REASON, seems to have her conscience in the human mind, which fails not to reproach us with every breach of duty.

ALAS! my friend, how often do we violence to NATURE, and cast her dictates behind! What artificial miseries do we lay up for ourselves, from the indulgence of imaginary wants!—we are not content to search for happiness within the sphere of Nature—it appears to be barren and insipid;—we fly for it into the more spacious and splendid circle of Art; we are amused and dissipated in the search; but we never find the object we are in quest of.—At length, weary and disappointed, we look back to the long-forsaken walks of Nature; sorry that ever we  
deferted

deserted them, and ready enough to compliment them with those pleasure-yielding qualities which we should now be glad to find.—But this last hope proves frequently vain:—By being long accustomed to an artificial life, we have lost all taste for simplicity, and what might easily have engaged our affections when young, we behold with aversion in the decline of life.

THEODOSIUS.

I UNDERSTAND you, my Lord.—You would advise me to cultivate the love of Nature, and to plan my life upon her simple model, while yet I am young.

Mr. De FENELON.

I WOULD—for the reasons I have already mentioned;—because in her walks you will find the only genuine, the only home-felt happiness;

happiness; which, however, you will be incapable of attaining, should you defer the application, 'till the habits of artificial life have deprived you of all relish for natural enjoyments.

THEODOSIUS.

THE wisdom and experience of my venerable instructor would be sufficient to convince me of the truth of these observations; but I think I have, within the little limits of my own attention, seen the last confirmed in many instances.

Mr. De FENELON.

IT must be obvious to every person who makes the least remarks on life, that those who have long lived in the circle of Vanity, can never quit it.—Not that they still find their account of pleasure in it; but that they  
are



are unfit for, and incapable of any other mode of enjoyment.—What veterans do we behold busy in the pursuit of the most contemptible trifles! What a disgrace to human reason, to behold a countenance, furrowed with age, distorted with chagrin over an unsuccessful game! How disgusting to hear a matron weighed down with years, discoursing like a girl, on the frippery of modes!—These are the unavoidable effects of pursuits habitually vain.—

BUT when I would advise you, THEODOSIUS, to live agreeably to nature, it is not alone that I would save you from frivolous pursuits and fantastic follies.—Life is not to be left unactive; and by escaping seduction into the path of vanity, you will, of course, take that of wisdom. To do this, indeed, and to live agreeably to nature, are terms of almost the same meaning.—For the end of wisdom, is a  
rational

rational and lasting happiness, which is only to be found in acting conformably to the purpose of our existence, and in treading in those paths of truth and simplicity, which nature has pointed out.



HERE my ever revered instructor ended his welcome lessons.—I could have spent a life in hearing him ; and thereby should have found that happiness, which he taught me how to obtain.

Two ends are answered by thus committing his precepts to writing ; which I have done without much difficulty, as they are yet fresh upon my memory.—The pen is an excellent memorialist ; and, while I am writing them for you, I establish them more securely  
in

in my own mind.—At the same time, I am convinced that CONSTANTIA will neither find them unentertaining, nor altogether useless, even in her own service.

LET me now turn to your last dear letter, which is not yet three days old, though so much has been written since I received it.

ALAS, my CONSTANTIA! (I address you as my heart suggests) this delightful intercourse may not be of any long continuance, notwithstanding your kind and tender solicitude, that our friendship may not be interrupted.

THE fathers of Constantia and of Theodosius, though their situation in some measure draws them into a specious interchange of civilities, are of tempers and sentiments so extremely different, that whenever they meet, methinks I can discover in each, a stifled contempt

tempt of the other. This gives me inexpressible mortification, as I am sensible that this contempt in both, arises from motives equally insignificant ; the one valuing himself on the superiority of his fortune, the other on the advantages of his birth.

MISTAKEN men !—What are the distinctions that place one man above another ?—Not wealth, or titles certainly.—Genius, wisdom and virtue alone, have this distinguishing power ; for these alone are capable of enlarging and ennobling the mind, and of exalting the human capacity as high as it will go.

How long this smothered contempt will be suppressed by politeness, I tremble to think.—Upon the least failure of respect in either party, it will burst into a storm—and—ah !—then, my fair friend !—then, farewell this  
 dear

dear and happy intercourse of letters!—Farewell the delightful freedom of our morning conversations!—The sweet *sejour* at noon—

Sotto le fresche fronde  
Del fresco faggio——

and the walk at evening through breathing beanfields.—Ah! enchanting walks, CONSTANTIA! when Fancy heightened by the surrounding beauties of nature, gave to all our discourse the happiest enthusiasm!

SHOULD I not tremble, even at the possibility of losing a happiness like this?

—BUT let us not afflict ourselves with distant evils! (O that they were far distant!) I will think no longer of them, but quitting those tenderly-anxious thoughts, which the beginning of your kind letter suggested,  
will



will proceed to that part of it, where you obligingly propose a question, and call upon me for an answer.

I AM, indeed, of opinion, that the professors of religion hurt it's interests by pursuing them too closely; particularly, when they make a merit of unnatural and unnecessary severities.—Yet this unfortunate doctrine has thrown it's galling weight on the easy yoke of Christianity, almost ever since it's publication.—The fathers, those fathers in whom the church has placed such an implicit confidence, gave to that religion, which was meant to enlarge and humanize the mind, the meanest and most contracted spirit and principles.—Some disgraced it by the vilest quibbles † and misquotations; others loaded it with the most superfluous severities, for-

† See Justin Martyr's ridiculous apologies for the cross.

bidding the use of natural and lawful pleasures \*;—nay one † even goes so far, as to declare, that the Patriarch was deemed worthy of a heavenly vision, only because he lay his head upon the hard pillow of a stone, and what he did from necessity, advises us to do by choice.—One ‡ has fallen into the most idle and absurd spirit of allegorizing the plainest literal narratives, facts, and precepts; another §, with equal absurdity, adheres so closely to the letter, that he tells us the devil invented buskins to give God the lie, because it is said, that a man cannot add one cubit to his stature.—In short, my friend, these lights of the church were, in general, the most miserable fanatics, ignorant, puerile, and

\* Athenagoras, Jerom, Cyprian, &c.

† Clement of Alexandria.

‡ Origen.

§ Tertullian.

persecuting.—No wonder, therefore, if those who consider them as guides, should tread in their steps.—No wonder if they should cherish ignorance, folly, fanaticism, and every ridiculous effect of blind and superstitious zeal.

UNDOUBTEDLY, my fair Reasoner, these misguided severities are ruinous to the real interest of religion; and it's professors, as you observe, have certainly hurt those interests by pursuing them too closely.

7

SLAVISH and broken spirits may thus, indeed, be imposed upon;—but where is that *Free-will-offering*, that rational and liberal worship, which founded in an intelligent faith and gratitude, does real honour to the deity?—Such a worship can never be paid, 'till the mind rescued from the tyranny of an imposed belief,

belief, acquires the privilege of thinking and concluding for itself.

IT would, therefore, be for the real interest of religion (if that interest may be allowed to consist in the promotion of a rational worship, and an intelligent faith) that the mind should be set at large; and Father M—— would by no means lose his account in it with regard to your piety, though he should, as you say, give you a little respite, and suffer you to diversify your reading and your studies: For, what you observe is certainly just; and you would not only return to the attentions of religion with greater alacrity; but, by enlarging your moral and natural knowledge, you would acquire new and nobler principles of devotion, from beholding the wisdom and benevolence of your Creator, displayed throughout the moral and the natural world.

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BUT

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BUT whether or not you can obtain this indulgence from your confessor, you will by all means secure this letter from his inquisitorial eye; otherwise, the fate not only of the letter itself, but of the writer, may be somewhat dubious.

I SMILED at your wish, that I were appointed your confessor in the room of Father M——. If I thought you sincere in that wish, I should have very little inclination to be satisfied; for, believe me, I had rather stand in any other relation to you.—In one respect, however, I should be gratified by this appointment.—I should learn the state of your heart; and be assured I would govern it with absolute sway,—that would be a circumstance worthy my ambition.—Adieu! my amiable friend, and remember that if ever



I am honoured with the abovementioned appointment, I will make it my question, whether you were sincere when you expressed that wish.

THEODOSIUS.

G 3

LET-

## L E T T E R IX.

CONSTANTIA to THEODOSIUS.

I Have a thousand things to say ; but where shall I begin, where end?—My heart dies within me, when I think of some passages in your last—what dreadful spirits of misfortune have you conjured up ! lay them ; for heaven's sake lay them again, if you have any regard for my peace or happiness.—Shall I tell you that the enjoyment of your friendship is very essential to both ? why should I not tell you so ? Surely silence on such a subject would be a kind of dissimulation !

THIS free and candid acknowledgment, is the only return I am able to make, for all that industry of kindness I have experienced  
from

from THEODOSIUS.—Poor and inadequate is the reward, but what can I do more? Is it in my power to return those rich lessons in kind, by which I have been so much delighted,—I hope, profited?—Exalted Moralist! amiable and excellent Philosopher! what a loss would CONSTANTIA suffer, if deprived of your friendship! To you she owes every valuable sentiment, and almost all the little knowledge she can boast;—whatever, in your kindness, you are pleased to distinguish with praise; all, all is yours:

—Onde f' alcun bel frutto  
Nasce di me; da voi vien prima il seme.  
Io per me son quasi un terreno asciutto,  
Colta da voi; e'l pregio è vostro in tutto.

How infinitely am I obliged to you for communicating so minutely your conversation with the excellent Fenelon! every word of that

prelate deserves to be written in letters of gold.—What sublime philosophy ! What enlarged morality ! What striking lineaments of human nature, and human manners !

BUT I am most charmed with the venerable man, when he explains and enforces his precept of *living agreeably to nature*.—I felt the truth of his observations without the aid of experience.—And shall I appear vain, when I tell you, that I have always retained certain sentiments, that were of a colour with those of your noble friend ?—I have always thought that not only the moral, but the religious happiness of human life, was best cultivated by that simplicity of manners and desires, which would always attend the love and pursuit of nature. Admire with me the following passage, which describes the happiness of the man who leads such a life :

E'l dubbio, e'l forse, e'l come, e'l perché, rio  
 Nol posson far, che non istà fra loro ;  
*E col vero e col semplice iddio lega,*  
 E'l ciel propizio alle sue voglie piega.

I think the sentiment, in the third-quoted verse, of uniting the idea of a God with *Truth* and *Simplicity*, remarkably beautiful.

You see I have already profited by the *Academician's* letter, and have not neglected the amusements of poetry and the *Belles Lettres*.—I am willing to ascribe to this elegant course of reading, still greater advantages than he has allowed it, and am of opinion, that the best philosophy and morality, is to be found in the works of the poets ; for with regard to philosophy, I would gladly be of opinion with the English poet, where he says,

How



How charming is divine philosophy !  
 Not harsh and crabbed as dull fools suppose,  
 But musical as is Apollo's lute !

I would willingly persuade myself, that the best poets are capable of instructing us in every part of useful knowledge; for I find a charm in their works, superior to the pleasure any other mode of writing affords me.

WHETHER it is the power of harmony, or imagination, that thus leads me captive, I am at a loss to know; whether it is the elegance of thought, the tenderness, or the gentility peculiar to poetry, that delights me most, I am unable to determine; but all together give me the most exquisite, the most refined entertainment.—I wonder not that honours, next to divine, have always been paid to poets; and that those heaven-favoured geniuses, have ever been esteemed superior to  
 the

the rest of mankind. For my own part;  
if I should bring an offering to the shrine  
of any human Being, it should be to that  
of a poet.

ADIEU!

CONSTANTIA.

LET-

## L E T T E R X.

THEODOSIUS to CONSTANTIA.

**T**HE approbation of CONSTANTIA is more than the reward of worlds, and her favour more valuable. The utmost of my ambition has ever been to serve and oblige her, but why will she ascribe to those services, to those poor endeavours to please more merit than they can possibly have a claim to?—But it is no wonder if CONSTANTIA, who possesses every virtue in the highest degree, should carry her gratitude to excess.

I WILL not anticipate those evils which my fears, possibly too industrious, have so often brought before me; but, while this delightful correspondence lasts, I will sit down, with security, to enjoy the sweets of it.

WHAT

WHAT spirit and sensibility ! What elegance of thought, in your last charming letter ! you have even improved upon the Archbishop's precept of *living agreeably to nature* ; and, in concert with the Italian poet, from whom you have quoted that passage, so justly admired, you have thrown a new light upon the subject.

NOTHING could be more nobly conceived, than the sentiment of uniting the idea of a God with *Truth* and *Simplicity*.—To deify and adore those amiable virtues, is certainly a very pardonable species of idolatry—if, indeed, it can be called idolatry ; for we, certainly, worship the SUPREME PERFECTION, while we worship his attributes, as it is only in those we can form any idea of him.

AND yet it was from this source that idolatry, with all it's troublesome and pernicious consequences,

consequences, was derived of old. When the attributes of the universal Being were personified and exhibited by figures, the multitude, never capable of abstracted thinking, numbered so many gods.

THE sentiments of your poet has, nevertheless, great metaphorical propriety;—when divine honours are paid to Truth and Simplicity, much, certainly, is done for the service of virtue.

As you are professedly an admirer of simple nature, I will venture to send you a poem, which, on that account, I hope will be recommended by the subject.—At least, I am sure, it has nothing else to recommend it; and let that declaration convince you, I have not the presumptuous ambition, to aspire to the name and dignity of a Poet, or to hope that you will bring an offering to my shrine.

Written



Written in a Cottage-garden, at a Village  
in *Lorrain*; and occasioned by a Tradition,  
concerning a Tree of Rosemary.

ARBUSTUM LOQUITUR.

I.

O THOU whom *Love* and *Fancy* lead  
To wander near this woodland hill,  
If ever music smooth'd thy quill,  
Or pity wak'd thy gentle reed,  
Repose beneath my humble tree,  
If thou lov'st Simplicity.

II.

STRANGER if thy lot has laid,  
In toilsome scenes of busy life;  
Full sorely may'st thou rue the strife,  
Of weary passions ill-repaid.  
In a garden live like me,  
If thou lov'st Simplicity.

FLOWERS

III.

FLOWERS have sprung for many a year  
 O'er the village-maiden's grave,  
 That, one memorial-sprig to save,  
 Bore it from a sister's bier ;  
 And homeward-walking, wept o'er me  
 The true tears of Simplicity.

IV.

AND soon, her cottage-window near  
 With care my slender stem she plac'd ;  
 And fondly thus her grief embrac'd,  
 And cherish'd sad remembrance dear :  
 For love sincere, and friendship free  
 Are children of Simplicity.

V.

WHEN past was many a painful day,  
 Slow-pacing o'er the village-green,  
 In white were all it's maidens seen,  
 And bore my guardian friend away.  
 Ah death ! what sacrifice to thee,  
 The ruins of Simplicity !

## VI.

ONE generous swain her heart approv'd,  
 A youth, whose fond and faithful breast  
 With many an artless sigh confess'd,  
 In nature's language, that he lov'd.  
 But, stranger, 'tis no tale for thee,  
 Unless thou lov'st Simplicity.

## VII.

HE died—and soon her lip was cold,  
 And soon her rosy cheek was pale;  
 The village wept to hear the tale,  
 When for both the slow bell toll'd—  
 Beneath yon flowery turf they lie,  
 The lovers of Simplicity.

## VIII.

YET one boon have I to crave;  
 Stranger if thy pity bleed,  
 Wilt thou do one tender deed,  
 And strew my pale flowers o'er their grave?  
 So lightly lie the turf on thee,  
 Because thou lov'st Simplicity!

THERE is such a pleasure in the indulgence of tender melancholy and pity; that lest I should deprive you of it, I will not add one word more than

THEODOSIUS.

\* \* THE flowery branch of Rosemary, that accompanies this, was gathered from the tree, whose genius spoke the above verses.

LET-

## L E T T E R XI.

## CONSTANTIA TO THEODOSIUS.

**Y**OU must be sensible that you could not oblige me more than by favouring me with any of your poetical productions.—Your Village-maid, is a pathetic picture of rural Simplicity; as such I shall preserve it, together with the flowery branch of Rosemary, that accompanied it, for the sake of the author.

YOUR last favour reminds me of another, which you sometime ago promised, but have now, perhaps, forgot.—You praised the *Latin* verses of the celebrated English poet we have so often admired, and called him the best writer in that language since the age of *Constantine*. When I complained that I was



unable to read him in that language, you kindly promised me a translation of one of his finest *Latin* poems, which, I think, you called a Pastoral Elegy on the death of one of his friends, whom he expected to have embraced on his return from abroad, but found that he had taken his journey to that distant country,

—————from whose bourn

No traveller returns————

Such a subject is capable of great tenderness ; and, at the hands of MILTON, it could not fail of finding it. Let me have one more instance of your kindness, in the execution of your promise.

ADIEU !

CONSTANTIA.

LETTER XII.

THEODOSIUS to CONSTANTIA.

I Have made haste to oblige you ; therefore,  
you must be as ready to forgive, as I  
have been to obey.

The pastoral part of Milton's *Epitaphium  
Damonis*.

O FOR the soft lays of HIMERIA's maids!  
The strains that died in *Arethusa's* shades;  
Tun'd to wild sorrow on her mournful shore,  
When *Daphnis*, *Hylas*, *Bion* breath'd no more!  
THAME's vocal wave should every note prolong,  
And all his villas learn the *Doric* song.

How THYRSIS mourn'd his long-lov'd DAMON  
dead;  
What sighs he utter'd, and what tears he shed—

Ye dim retreats, ye wandring fountains know ;  
 Ye desert-wilds bore witness to his woe :  
 Where oft in grief, he past the tedious day,  
 Or lonely languish'd the dull night away.

TWICE had the fields their blooming honours  
 bore ;

And *Autumn* twice resign'd his golden store,  
 Unconscious of his loss, while *THYRSIS* staid  
 To woo the sweet muse in the *Tuscan* shade,  
 Crown'd with her favour, when he sought again  
 His flock forsaken, and his native plain ;  
 When to his *old Elm's* wonted shade return'd—  
 Then—then he miss'd his parted friend—and  
 mourn'd.

And go, he cry'd, my tender lambs adieu !  
 Your wretched master has no time for you.

YET are there powers divine in earth or sky ?  
 Gods can they be who destin'd thee to die ?  
 And shalt thou mix with shades of vulgar name ?  
 Lost thy fair honours, and forgot thy fame ?  
 Not he, the God whose golden wand restrains  
 The pale-ey'd people of the gloomy plains,  
 Of *DAMON's* fate shall thus regardless be,  
 Or suffer vulgar shades to herd with thee.  
 Then, go, he cry'd, &c.

YET

YET while one strain my trembling tongue may  
 try,  
 Not unlamented, Shepherd, shalt thou die.  
 Long in these fields thy fame shall flourish fair,  
 And DAPHNIS only greater honours share;  
 To DAPHNIS only purer vows be paid,  
 While PAN, or PALES loves the village-shade.  
 If Truth or Science may survive the grave,  
 Or, what is more, a poet's friendship save.  
 Then go, &c.

THESE, these are thine: For me what hopes  
 remain?  
 Save of long sorrow, and of anguish vain.  
 For who, still faithful to my side, shall go,  
 Like thee, thro' regions clad with chilling snow?  
 Like thee, the rage of fiery summers bear,  
 When fades the wan flower in the burning air?  
 The lurking dangers of the chace essay,  
 Or soothe with song, and various tale the day?  
 Then go, &c.

To whom shall I my hopes and fears impart?  
 Or trust the *cares* and *follies* of my heart?  
 Whose gentle counsels put those cares to flight?  
 Whose chearful converse cheat the tedious night?

The social hearth when *Autumn's* treasures store,  
Chill blow the winds without, and thro' the bleak  
elm roar.

Then go, &c.

WHEN the fierce suns of summer noons invade,  
And PAN repofes in the green-wood-shade,  
The fhepherds hide, the nymphs plunge down  
the deep,  
And waves the hedge-row o'er the plowman's fleep.  
Ah ! who fhall charm with fuch addrefs refin'd,  
Such *Attic* wit, and elegance of mind?

Then go, &c.

ALAS ! now lonely round my fields I ftray ;  
And lonely feek the paffure's wonted way.  
Or in fome dim vale's mournful fhade repofe—  
There penfive wait the weary day's flow clofe,  
While fhowers defcend, the gloomy tempeft raves,  
And o'er my head the ftragglng twilight waves.

Then go, &c.

WHERE once fair harveft cloath'd my cultur'd  
plain,  
Now weeds obfcene and vexing brambles reign ;  
The



The groves of myrtle, and the clustering vine  
Delight no more ; for joy no more is mine.  
My flocks no longer find a master's care,  
E'en piteous as they gaze with looks of dumb  
despair.

Then go, &c.

THY hazel, TYT'RUS, has no charms for me ;  
Nor yet thy wild ash, lov'd ALPHESIBEE.  
No more shall Fancy weave her rural dream,  
By ÆGON's willow, or Amynta's stream.  
The trembling leaves, the fountain's cool serene,  
The murmuring zephyr, and the mossy green—  
These smile unseen, and those unheeded play,  
I cut my shrubs, and careless walk'd away.

Then go, &c.

MOPSUS, who knows what fates the stars  
dispense,  
And solves the grove's wild warblings into sense,  
This MOPSUS mark'd—what thus thy spleen can  
move ?  
Some baleful planet, or some hopeless love ?

The

The star of SATURN oft annoys the swain,  
And in the dull, cold breast, long holds his leaden  
reign.

Then go, &c.

THE Nymphs too, piteous of their Shepherd's  
woe,

Came, the sad cause solicitous to know.

Is this the port of jocund youth, they cry,  
That look disgusted, and that down-cast eye?

Gay smiles and love on that soft season wait;

\* He's twice a wretch whom beauty wounds too late.

Then go, &c.

ONE gentle tear the *British* CHLORIS gave,  
CHLORIS the grace of MALDON's purple wave—  
In vain—my grief no soothing words disarm,  
Nor future hopes, nor present good can charm.  
Then go, &c.

\* Milton seems to have borrowed this sentiment from  
Guarini:

Che se t'affale a la canuta etate  
Amoroso talento,  
Havrai doppio tormento,  
E di quel, che potendo non volesti,  
E di quel, che volendo ne potrai.

THE

THE happier flocks one social spirit moves,  
 The same their sports, their pastures and their loves:  
 Their hearts to no peculiar object tend,  
 None knows a favourite, or selects a friend.  
 So herd the various natives of the main,  
 And PROTEUS drives in crowds his scaly train.  
 The feather'd tribes too find an easier fate;  
 The meanest sparrow still enjoys his mate;  
 And when by chance, or wearing age she dies,  
 The transient loss a second choice supplies.

MAN, hapless man, for ever doom'd to know  
 The dire vexations that from discord flow,  
 In all the countless numbers of his kind,  
 Can scarcely meet with one congenial mind.  
 If haply found, Death wings the fatal dart,  
 The tender union breaks, and breaks his heart.  
 Then go, &c.

AH me! what error tempted me to go  
 O'er foreign mountains and thro' *Alpine* snow?  
 Too great the price to mark in TIBER's gloom  
 The mournful image of departed ROME!  
 Nay, yet immortal, could she boast again  
 The glories of her universal reign,

And

And all that MARO left his fields to see,  
 Too great the purchase, to abandon thee!  
 To leave thee in a land no longer seen!—  
 Bid mountains rise, and oceans roll between!—  
 Ah! not embrace thee!—not to see thee die!  
 Meet thy last looks, or close thy languid eye!  
 Not one fond farewell with thy shade to send,  
 Nor bid thee think of thy surviving friend!  
 Then go, &c.

YE *Tuscan* Shepherds, pardon me this tear!  
 Dear to the Muse, to me for ever dear!  
 The youth I mourn a *Tuscan* title bore.—  
 See \* *Lydian* LUCCA for her son deplore!

O DAYS of extasy! when rapt I lay  
 Where ARNO wanders down his flowery way,—  
 Pluck'd the pale violet, press'd the velvet mead,  
 Or bade the myrtle's balmy fragrance bleed!—  
 Delighted, heard amid the rural throng  
 MENALCAS strive with LYCIDAS in song.

\* The Thuscans were a branch of the Pelasgi that migrated into Europe not many ages after the dispersion. Some of them marched by land as far as *Lydia*, and from thence detached a colony under the conduct of *Tyrscnus* to Italy.

OFT would my voice the mimic strain essay,  
 Nor haply all unheeded was my lay :  
 For, Shepherds, yet I boast your generous meed,  
 The osier basket, and compacted reed.  
 FRANCINO crown'd me with a poet's fame,  
 And DATI \* taught his beechen groves my name.

MILTON, when he was in *Italy*, had the peculiar good fortune, to find an age of geniuses, and to be distinguished by their favour in a very extraordinary manner. That polish which the young mind receives from the elegant simplicity of the classics, he enjoyed in the greatest perfection. The considerable fund of that kind of knowledge, which he took with him into *Italy*, he had the happiest means of improving and perfecting, in those inspiring scenes,

\* When Milton was in *Italy*, Carlo Dati was Professor of Philosophy at Florence.—A liberal friend to men of genius and learning, as well foreigners as his own countrymen.—He wrote a panegyric and some poems on Lewis XIV. besides other tracts.

where



where the finest writers of *Latium* first drew their breath. — Those scenes afforded the best comment on the works of the Roman classics, and *Milton* shewed in all his *Latin* poems, that he tasted their beauties in the most refined degree.

THE friend he bewails in the charming poem, of which I have made these humble efforts to shew you the beauties, was the companion of his early years ; and it is no wonder that he laments him with such pathetic tenderness : For friendships of that kind, which are nursed under the sunshine of young enthusiasm, are always the most vigorous. — Are they not, my *CONSTANTIA* ? — I feel they are ; for I am, &c.

THEODOSIUS.

LET-

## L E T T E R XIII.

CONSTANTIA to THEODOSIUS.

**I** Flew with your letter to our favourite alcove; and there with what pleasure, with what avidity I perused it, THEODOSIUS need not be told.

I VERILY believe, that I am better pleased to be entertained than to be instructed; for I scarce ever received so much pleasure from a letter of yours, as your last afforded me—yet what can be the reason? It is not, certainly, that I am jealous of your instructive letters as giving you a superiority—I cannot charge myself with so much pride.—Nay, were I not sensible of that superiority, I must be stupid indeed;—thus, however, I flatter myself on my penetration in being able to

6

distinguish

distinguish it, and on my modesty in being satisfied with it; and thus, like many other good people, I am vain of being free from vanity.

BUT all the instructions of my amiable Philosopher have been seasoned with so much politeness, or conveyed in such an indirect manner, that, while I had all the opportunity of profiting by them, I could hardly ever discern that they were intended for my use.—If then your last letter pleased me more than any other, it is because I am idle, and voluptuous, and take more pleasure in poetry than in philosophy.

YET the genius of MILTON had such a moral turn, that he seldom wrote poetry without writing philosophy; and even the Pastoral you have so obligingly translated, is not, I find, without something of it. How beautifully does he bewail the lost advantages of friendship!

To

To whom shall I my hopes and fears impart,  
Or trust the cares and follies of my heart?

And alas! how truly does he lament that  
man

In all the countless numbers of his kind,  
Can scarcely meet with one congenial mind!

Young as I am, I have felt the force of this truth, and have made many melancholy reflections upon it, after the painful, ridiculous, trifling, and impertinent visits I have been obliged to pay and receive, from the sillier part of my sex. Horrid tyranny of fashion that imposes this upon us! What right can an equality, or a superiority of fortune give one lady to rob another of her time, sense and patience? I say her *Sense*; for the conversation of fools leaves a tincture of folly upon us.—What title has dress or figure to lay tax

I

upon

upon us for admiration ? Do not they who expect this, insult our understanding ? And are not those who pay it, the slaves of folly ? O that the shackles of custom were once broken, and that we might chuse our society out of either sex without censure, or inconvenience !

JUST before I received your letter, I was delivered from the most despicable and impertinent set of visiters, that ever disgraced the name of good company.—To me such visits are always visitations.—To the above-mentioned deliverance, you may, if you please, impute some degree of that extraordinary pleasure I ascribed to the perusal of your letter.—This I say, lest I should contribute to make you, what you have so often made me, vain ; and thus, at least, you must acknowledge, that I outdo you in generosity.

I AM



I AM not displeased with your observation, that young friendships are the most tender—no doubt they are—for the friendships, like all other pursuits and attachments of youth, have novelty to recommend them, passions to enliven, and enthusiasm to cherish them.—But ah ! my friend ! (for once I will say, my THEODOSIUS !) when novelty is no more ; when the passions subside, and enthusiasm vanishes like a dream ; will not the friendships, will not the attachments, that these principles produced, vanish with them ?—I will not fear it, though it should be true

—————non è prudenza

Ma follia de mortali

L' arte crudel di prefagirsi i mali.

One thing, however, I will freely acknowledge, or rather boast of, that my friendship for THEODOSIUS is, exclusively, found-

ed on esteem. For this reason, I flatter myself, that it will last in all it's present cordiality—why should it not? It has nothing to lose, when the charm of novelty is lost.—It's existence, by no means, depends upon the passions; it has, therefore, nothing to apprehend when they languish, or decline.—It derives not its support from enthusiasm, and, consequently, cannot suffer, when enthusiasm dies away.

WHILE thus I comfort, I hope I do not deceive myself.—But, should even that be the case, let your ingenuity for once give way to your compassion, and do not undeceive me.—This is, perhaps, the only instance in which I could be satisfied with myself, for declining the report of truth.

OBSERVE, however, that I expect you will, with the utmost candour and ingenuity,  
 resolve

resolve some parts of my doubts, and tell me freely, whether those young friendships which are heightened by novelty, by the passions and enthusiasm, will not inevitably perish with those sources that support them.

You see I have been at pains to induce you to declare your sentiments, on this subject; since I have removed the principal objection, that might have occurred to you, by declaring, that my friendship for you cannot be affected by the argument.

ADIEU!

CONSTANTIA.

## L E T T E R XIV.

THEODOSIUS to CONSTANTIA.

**T**HOUGH there is nothing in which  
 CONSTANTIA has not a right to com-  
 mand her friend, and though, in every thing,  
 it is his pride and pleasure to obey her; yet  
 he will own, that he goes unwillingly about  
 the task she has appointed him.—

AH! my dear, my amiable moralist! It is  
 frequently the happiness of man to shut his  
 eyes against the infirmities of his nature!—  
 In those circumstances, where the knowledge  
 of his weakness, cannot save him from some  
 real evil, that knowledge is of less value than  
 ignorance.

THE

THE benevolent purposes of Providence, have concealed the future from us, that we may not be interrupted in the enjoyment of the present ; and it is, in many cases, necessary to our happiness, that we should imitate this œconomy of the Supreme Wisdom, and embrace those innocent pleasures, which the several periods of life may afford us, without enquiring too officiously into their causes or events, and without being too solicitous about their duration.

MANY, possibly, of our pleasures, many, I am sure, of our amusements, spring from such sources, as, upon enquiry, would be found to do little honour to a creature distinguished by reason. Their tendency, at the same time, is frequently as insignificant as their cause, and both are unworthy of a serious enquiry.



THERE are, indeed, enjoyments of a higher nature that may better deserve our attention; and yet, to enquire into the probability of their duration, might contribute very little to our happiness.—

SUCH, in particular, are the connections of friendship.—These are the property of man, and must, therefore, be frail, changeable and uncertain like himself. It must, consequently, be for his ease to sit down unapprehensive to enjoy them, without meditating on all the possible variety of evils, to which they must be exposed, from a change of sentiments and inclinations, and from the several contingencies of chance and time.

IT is into the fate of young friendships, my CONSTANTIA, that you would lead my enquiries. These, indeed, are not the least unworthy of our attention; for youth is the  
season

season both of friendship and of virtue.—If to a disposition naturally not unsociable, we have added, the advantages of a liberal education, we come into the business and society of life, in general, better and happier creatures than when we leave it.

WE step into the world with liberal sentiments and benevolent affections, but the experimental knowledge of men contracts the former and starves the latter.—Inasmuch that he must be possessed of a disposition, more than ordinarily humane, who does not in some degree, become a misanthropist before he dies.—I may go further, and add, that he must have uncommon virtue and greatness of mind, who, with unblemished manners, and uncontracted sentiments, can sail with such a corrupted crew down the current of life.

MAN

MAN is, in spite of all his reason, an imitative creature, and what he has been long accustomed to observe in others, he will, with difficulty, forbear to admit in himself. By habit we may bring ourselves to behold deformity without disgust, and by being long conversant in scenes of enmity and insincerity, the love of truth and humankind will insensibly decay.

As youth, therefore, is the season of sincerity and benevolence, it must, of consequence, be the most promising season of friendship; for those virtues are it's best and surest foundation.

WE love a benevolent man for our own sakes, and a sincere man for the sake of his sincerity.—Esteem for ever attends the union of these;—that esteem which my CONSTAN-

TIA

TIA has done me the honour to acknowledge, as the source of her friendship !

THUS, my fair Casuist, you see we have a sufficient foundation whereon to erect an early friendship, exclusive of *Novelty*, the *Passions*, and *Enthusiasm* ; and we may justly conclude, therefore, that such a friendship may exist, though all such auxiliaries should vanish or decay.

YET while these last, they undoubtedly yield us a more high-set pleasure, as well in friendship, as in every other enjoyment.

NEVERTHELESS I know not whether much ought to be ascribed to Novelty, which, in the cup of friendship, is, certainly, the very worst ingredient. — Possibly it may, for a while, give a poignancy to the taste, but the mellowing

mellowing power of Time, produces a much better and more agreeable flavour.

THE prevalence and activity of the passions, keep up that lively zest, and ardour of affection, which add to the readiness of confidence, and are productive of a thousand agreeable sensations.

ENTHUSIASM has an effect on friendship proportionable to it's influence on Love.— It heightens it with the glowing sentiments of imagination, and embellishes it's real advantages with the visionary charms of Fancy, and intellectual Refinement !

YET when these shall depart with departing youth ; while *Sincerity* and *Benevolence* remain, Friendship shall remain with them. —A reflection, which affords me the highest



est consolation! as I am convinced that,  
in consequence of those principles, CON-  
STANTIA cannot cease to be the friend  
of

**THEODOSIUS.**

**LET-**

## L E T T E R XV.

CONSTANTIA TO THEODOSIUS.

WHAT a letter! my friend.—If you have drawn a true picture of human nature, and if the knowledge of the world, be really attended with the consequences you mention, who would not live in ignorance? —Ah! THEODOSIUS! what fears! what uneasiness has your letter awakened!—Better, indeed, my Philosopher, had you suffered me to continue in ignorance!—Better, and kinder, had you permitted me to enjoy my visionary dream of the duration and improvement of human virtue!—Ah! too penetrating friend!—Too ingenious in the discovery of that weakness, it would have been happier to hide!—You were sensible of this truth,

truth, and why would you gratify my impertinent curiosity, only to make me miserable?—To give me melancholy and mortifying ideas of that life in which my lot has fallen!

YET, surely, THEODOSIUS, the sweet affections of BENEVOLENCE will not wear away with youth.—If the commerce of the world doth not corrupt the heart, surely, it will still have room for so delightful a guest.—I declare, that without one womanish fear, I would part with my being, rather than hold it on any other terms.

BUT what superfluous fears do I entertain? This dreadful shipwreck can only happen on the tempestuous ocean of the world—my bark, I am determined, shall not be exposed to such ruin.—Safely shall it steer

into

into

into some quiet harbour, and rest secure from storms and tempests.

SERIOUSLY and plainly, my friend, you have given me such ideas of mixing with the world, and of the inconveniences which attend it, that I, who can boast no superior fortitude, conclude, it must be my happiness to live in solitary obscurity.—There I can embrace your good prelate's precept, and *live agreeably to nature*.—There I shall be free from the impertinence of Folly, and the censoriousness of Envy.—My precious hours will not be sacrificed to triflers; I shall employ them in studies worthy of a rational creature.

O THEODOSIUS! for those delightful moments that shall glide away on the halcyon-wings of Peace and Tranquillity!—for those dear uninterrupted days of letters and leisure, when the mind may riot in intellectual festivity;

vity; and free from every low, every vulgar and debasing care, may acquire that dignity and knowledge, which shall properly recommend it to some higher state of existence !

WHAT luxury is in the thought ! even now I anticipate the happiness I describe.—Even now, in imagination, I enjoy those easy pleasures, that independence of mind and body, which solitude and liberty must afford.—I look back on THEODOSIUS bustling in the world, pity him, pray for him, and tremble for his virtue.

ADIEU ! ADIEU !

CONSTANTIA.

K

LET-



## LETTER XVI.

THEÓDOSIUS to CONSTANTIA.

“**E**NJOY thy dream, dear and amiable Enthusiast! Enjoy thy visionary scene! To rouse thee from those delightful reveries, to break those fancy-favoured slumbers, would be cruel, if not impious.”—Such, and so expressed were my sentiments, on perusing your last dear letter.—But Tenderness must give place to Truth;—at least in a circumstance so important, as that of laying down a plan of life.

THERE is scarce any thing in which the mind is so apt to mistake it's true interest, as in projects of future happiness.—It is impossible to know how we shall bear those stations, or circumstances, which we have only

7

contemplated

contemplated at an unaffecting distance; and yet, with an assurance that does more honour to our courage, than our discretion, we venture to conclude, that those appointments, or schemes of life to which we are perfectly strangers, would infallibly complete our felicity.

IN the mean time, we never consider, that new stations, and appointments to which we have not been accustomed, must necessarily take us out of our usual train of sentiments, actions, and attentions. This, however, will make us uneasy; for change is always an evil, and we never feel it more sensibly, than in the manner and œconomy of life.

WITH respect to your scheme of living secluded from the world, I should have condemned it with the short censure of a smile,

had I not paid so much deference to your Reason and *Judgment*, as to conclude, that those ought to be appealed to on every argument that might relate to your sentiments and resolutions.

WILL my beautiful friend forgive me, then, if I suppose *that Judgment* to have been *bribed* by enthusiasm, when she concluded that, by living alone, she should *live agreeably to nature*?

I AM sensible, Madam, that by this you meant no more than, that such a mode of life would exempt you from those external temptations, those idle luxuries and follies, which are apt to make us deviate from the paths of Truth and Simplicity.—But did you consider, that to live *alone*, is to live *contrary* to nature?—A state of solitude, is not the natural state of man.—The arguments I  
should

should make use of to prove this are old and obvious.—That I may be less unentertaining, therefore, while I mean to set before you the inconveniencies attending your scheme of life, I will give you a short account of a lady of my own family, who formed the same resolutions, and put them in practice.

THUS her story is related in a manuscript, still preserved among the family-papers.

EUDOCIA, an only daughter, was bred up under the auspices of ALTHERIA, a lady equally distinguished by her piety as a christian, and her affection as a parent. The temper and genius of the daughter were naturally warm and susceptible: The offices and duties of religion had habitually inspired her with such a zealous and fervent devotion, that she seemed to have no happiness, that

did not flow from those exercises and attentions which religion required.

HER knowledge of books was little, of human nature less. She had, notwithstanding, conceived an infinite contempt for that world, to which she was utterly a stranger, and concluded, that to enter into the interests and engagements of society, would be a voluntary sacrifice to Vice and Folly.

EUDOCIA was in natural good sense, beauty, and a sweetness of disposition, equalled by few women of her time.— These qualities engaged the affections of ALPHENOR, a gentleman whose genius and penetration gave him a kind of intuitive knowledge of the human heart.

HE concluded, that every attempt to introduce EUDOCIA to the world, or to establish  
the



the social life in her good opinion would be vain. He knew that it would be fruitless to argue with her on the pleasures she had never known, and the miseries she had never experienced.—He, therefore, did not expatiate, either on the advantages of society, or the inconveniencies of solitude; for such had been the condition of EUDOCIA's life, that, as yet, she was, in a great measure, a stranger to both.

UPON the death of her parents, which happened before she had attained her twenty-fifth year, her fortune and manner of life were at her own disposal.—She now determined to put in execution a scheme which she had long meditated.—It was to retire, but not into a convent. A spirit of liberty, had always saved her from that sacrifice, however industriously solicited by the emissaries of

the church, or encouraged by selfish relations.

SHE was possessed of an estate, situated in a very retired part of the province of *Compeigne*; and there it was that she had determined to live sequestered from the world, with no other society than an aged confessor, and necessary domestics.—Of the last she made a very few, and those females, sufficient.

AT this crisis it might have been expected, that ALPHENOR would have used his utmost address to dissuade her from her purpose.—By no means.—On the contrary, he encouraged her in her resolution, applauded the piety of her purpose, and expatiated on the happiness of solitary sanctity. He assumed not the least of the lover's character, but that of the religious friend.

By

By this means he gained one point, which he had used all his industry, all his art to obtain.—He had EUDOCIA's permission to pay her one visit at the end of three months after her retirement ; a favour which was allowed to none beside, either of her friends, or acquaintance, and which ALPHENOR himself, though through the mediation of religion, had scarce address sufficient to obtain.

EUDOCIA retired.—She approached the confines of her estate with raptures, and paid a kind of idolatrous worship to the venerable groves that surrounded her habitation.

“ HAIL, she cried, ye innocent and happy  
 “ foresters ! ye shall at once be the witnesses  
 “ and the guardians of my repose.—Enjoy  
 “ your vegetable existence, secure from the  
 “ cruelties

“cruelties and the ravages of man!—I have  
 “fled from the evils of society, to enjoy  
 “peace and innocence with you—my unde-  
 “signing friends! my blameless companions!  
 “often shall I associate with you, and re-  
 “pose under the kind protection of your  
 “shade.”

WITH the same kind of enthusiastic plea-  
 sure she walked through the several ap-  
 partments of her house, consecrating each  
 with a kind of petitionary ejaculation.

FOR the first week of her retirement,  
 she found sufficient employment in the œco-  
 nomy of her family, and the distribution  
 of their several offices to her domestics.—  
 The second she devoted wholly to reli-  
 gious exercises and the raptures of devo-  
 tion.

I HAVE

\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \*

I HAVE been interrupted, and you will not at present, be troubled with any further account of my pious ancestor.

ADIEU !

THEODOSIUS.

LET-



## LETTER XVII.

## THEODOSIUS to CONSTANTIA.

\* \* \* *BUT* whatever is rapturous cannot last long: Those exercises that lift the mind above it's usual pitch, if too frequently, or too long indulged, will at length, either totally destroy it, or deprive it of that sobriety, which is necessary for the preservation of it's due poise.

NATURE seems, in kindness, to have guarded us against the inconveniences that might arise from hence, by shortening the influence of joy, by inclining us to variety, and by giving the property, either of indifference, or disgust to every object, that has been too long, or too assiduously pursued, with what-  
ever

ever avidity it might have been embraced at first.

THAT little society to which EUDOCIA had hitherto been accustomed, was a necessary relief from the assiduities of religious studies and exercises ; and, far from being any prejudice, was in reality, favourable to the interests of religion.—It is certain, however, that she was of a different opinion, upon her first seclusion from the world ; but many weeks had not passed, before she felt the inconveniences of her mistake, if she was unwilling to perceive the mistake itself.

THE exercises of devotion, by being too frequently repeated, became languid and unaffecting : Her mind, having been accustomed to communication, shrunk under the weight of it's own sentiments ; and every succeeding

day approached less welcome, and more feared than the former.

WHAT should she do? Should she return to that world she had forsaken and despised? But, a sense of shame and pride rose in opposition to that thought, and strangled it in its birth.

IN this dissatisfied and dejected state, she recollected the appointment of ALPHENOR's visit—with joy she recollected it, and remembered, with a blush, the difficulties she had started against it.

“How, said she, shall I conceal that pleasure, which I cannot but feel at the sight of ALPHENOR? If I express my real sentiments, he will have reason to think his presence of some consequence to my happiness; and if I receive his visit with an indifference,

“ difference equal to that with which I re-  
 “ ceived the proposal of it, I shall do vio-  
 “ lence to that candour and sincerity of heart;  
 “ which cannot bear even the shadow of dis-  
 “ simulation.—In the former case, I should  
 “ appear a weak and unsteady creature to  
 “ ALPHENOR.—In the latter, I should be-  
 “ come insupportable to myself.”

WHILE she was thus meditating, in what  
 manner she should receive her friend, the  
 time appointed for his visit was at hand.—  
 But ALPHENOR did not appear—master of  
 every key to the human heart, he knew that  
 if, by delaying his visit to EUDOCIA, he gave  
 it the appearance of uncertainty, that un-  
 certainty would probably create an anxiety  
 on her part, which might not be unfavour-  
 able to his design.

THIS

THIS had the desired effect: Day after day passed away in the same solitary languor, and EUDOCIA concluded, that the many objections she had made to ALPHENOR's visit, had determined him at last, to think of it no more.—This reflection made her miserable, and she now wished for nothing so ardently, as that the presence of her friend would prove those apprehensions vain.

AT length he came.—A tear fell from the eye of EUDOCIA, when she received him; he observed it, and knew that he had now nothing more to do, than to reconcile her to herself, and to enable her to acknowledge her mistake without shame, or confusion.

THOSE wants that invention or eloquence could supply never distressed him long.

“ I HOPE,



“ I HOPE, Madam,” said he, “ that a life  
 “ of solitude has been more comfortable to  
 “ you than it has been to me.”—“ How,”  
 cried EUDOCIA, “ has ALPHENOR been a  
 “ Solitaire ?”

“ Such, Madam, I have been ever since I  
 “ lost the happiness of EUDOCIA’S conversa-  
 “ tion.—It was always my ambition to imitate  
 “ her.—Shall she, said I, shall a woman have  
 “ fortitude to forsake the world, and retire  
 “ to solitude, to practise the sublime duties of  
 “ religion ; and shall I not profit by the ex-  
 “ ample of that virtue I cannot but praise ?—  
 “ But alas ! Madam ! alas ! EUDOCIA ! shall  
 “ I confess to you——”

“ WHAT would ALPHENOR confess ?  
 “ Either the miseries and the inconveniences  
 “ of absolute solitude must be very great, or  
 “ I must have an uncommon and disgraceful

L

“ weakness

“weakness of mind ; for the time I have thus  
 “devoted, I have not spent in happiness,  
 “but in languor and discontent.”

EUDOCIA shed another tear.

“How kind, said ALPHENOR, thus to pity  
 “the unhappiness of your friend !”

“I CANNOT, replied EUDOCIA, accept of  
 “a compliment I do not deserve. The tear  
 “you observed had something selfish in it.—  
 “ALPHENOR can have no weakness, that is  
 “not the weakness of human nature ; and,  
 “could it be any satisfaction to him to know,  
 “that his friend has been as miserable in a  
 “state of solitude as himself, his own inge-  
 “nuous confession might countenance her  
 “in acknowledging it.”

FOR

\* \* \* \* \*

FOR a woman of my CONSTANTIA's penetration, it would be needless to transcribe any more of the above narrative; and it will be sufficient to inform her, that from the union of ALPHENOR and EUDOCIA, in a distant descent, came:

THEODOSIUS.

## L E T T E R XVIII.

CONSTANTIA to THEODOSIUS.

O H! Theodosius!—my guide!—my friend!—my instructor! alas!—no more!—

THE tear swims in my eye—my heart swells; and my hand trembles while I tell you, that you are—banished for ever from this place, and that I am forbidden to see you, or hear from you more.

WHAT, what shall I do? nothing ever can repair this cruel loss—the loss of a wife, a learned, and a virtuous friend! What has the world of equal worth?—Deprived, for ever deprived of that presence, which enliven-

ed with invariable chearfulness and sensibility!—of that conversation which never failed to make the mind richer, the heart happier—and (O cruel extension of resentment!) of that precious, that instructive correspondence, which, as it afforded me the best means of cultivating and improving my mind, ought to have been considered with gratitude by the very person who has forbidden it.

BUT of whom, or of what do I presume to complain? Duty restrains the remonstrances of grief, and the expostulations of sorrow.—You are not now ignorant, that the quarrel you dreaded, has actually happened, with the bitterest recriminations.

THEN, farewell, my best, and most valuable friend!—for ever to be remembered!—for ever to be regretted!—Accept of all I  
can



can return for your invariable, your industrious kindness!—Most respected of men!—most esteemed of friends!—Accept the gratitude of a tear, and think of

CONSTANTIA,

LET-

## LETTER XIX.

TO THEODOSIUS.

From an unknown Hand.

**T**HE writer of this letter is not a stranger to the mutual regard of THEODOSIUS and CONSTANTIA.—From sure authority he knows, that the hand of that lady is, by the appointment of her father, in which, it seems, she has acquiesced, within two days to be given to another. THEODOSIUS will make what use he thinks proper of this information, and conclude that he receives it from

A FRIEND.

## LETTER XX\*.

## THEODOSIUS to CONSTANTIA.

**T**HE thought of my CONSTANTIA, which has for some time been my only happiness, is now become a greater torment to me than I am able to bear.—Must I then live to see you another's?—Death is in the thought; and, indeed, life itself is now become a burthen to me.—May you long be happy in the world, but forget that there was ever such a man in it as

THEODOSIUS.

\* This letter, which, with some little variations, is recorded by the Spectator, No. 164, concludes the Correspondence of THEODOSIUS and CONSTANTIA, from their first acquaintance to the departure of THEODOSIUS.

THE END

